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47th plenary meeting
Thursday, 7 November 2013, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe . . . . . (Antigua and Barbuda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Haniff (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda items 29 and 123 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council

Report of the Security Council (A/68/2)

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

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): I would like to start by thanking the President of the General Assembly, Mr. John Ashe, for convening today's debate. My delegation fully supports the personal engagement and energy with which the President has worked to advance the United Nations reform agenda, with Security Council modernization as a top priority.

Let me start with the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2). We thank the Permanent Representative of China for introducing that document and the delegation of the United States for preparing its introduction. Having preliminarily studied this year's report, I would like to make just a few points. It is our understanding that there will be less time in today's debate for the detailed commentary that the report deserves.

First of all, we acknowledge the further improvements in the quality of the Council's annual report. At the same time, we share the view that there is still room for improving its prognostic and analytical components. My delegation also supports the idea that future reports of the Council should digest the views expressed by non-members of that body during its open debates.

As an active contributor of military and police personnel, Ukraine welcomes the fact that United Nations peacekeeping continues to feature prominently in the Council's agenda. In that context, thematic open debates have proved to be vital for sustaining positive momentum. We encourage the Council to further expand its outreach and give troop-contributing countries a stronger voice in the decision-making processes in that area.

Ukraine is in favour of further extending the thematic edge of the Council's agenda. Among the most challenging and far-reaching trends that have yet to be considered by the Council are, in the view of many delegations, such issues as sustainable energy and water security, which are vital for a large part of the United Nations membership, in particular small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and the least developed States.

Ukraine welcomes the consolidation, during the reporting period, of cooperation between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations. My country is committed to taking forward such instrumental partnerships and is currently contributing to that endeavour, inter alia, by serving as the current Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest

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regional organization. In that context, I would like to recall proposals set forth in the briefing to the Security Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Mr. Leonid Kozhara, who spoke in his capacity as OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, held in May 2013 (see S/PV.6961).

Ukraine strongly supports the Security Council's engagement in conflict prevention and mediation, as my country considers those efforts to be indispensable instruments in the Council's toolkit. Conflict prevention and mediation were of the utmost importance during Ukraine's sole term as an independent State on the Council, in 2000-2001, and they will remain so in the event that we are elected to the Council for the period 2016-2017. Let me now turn to the issue of Security Council reform. Ukraine supports all steps, either procedural or substantial, that can lead to some long-overdue progress in that area. It is in that context that we welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly to reappoint Ambassador Tanin as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations and to convene an advisory group on the issue.

As to Ukraine's national approach, let me recall that, when speaking in this Hall during the general debate in September, the President of Ukraine emphasized our openness to discussing all progressive opinions, options and new approaches to Security Council reform within the framework of the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations, which we fully support (see A/68/PV.5). In keeping with the aforementioned energy and environment group's consolidated position, it was also stressed that any increase in the Council's non-permanent membership should ensure the enhanced representation of the Group of Eastern European States by allocating to it of at least one additional non-permanent seat.

Let me add that Ukraine considers both directions of reform to be matters of high priority, namely, the enlargement of the Security Council and the improvement of its working methods. That is why we took note with interest of the recent proposal originating from the group of five permanent members of the Council with regard to the right of the veto. In terms of the Council's enlargement, we stand ready to explore ways that could lead to the broadest possible agreement.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the willingness of my delegation to contribute to the reform endeavour through active and constructive engagement in an open, transparent, inclusive and comprehensive negotiating process.

Ms. Tan (Singapore): We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this annual debate. The Assembly has debated the question of the equitable representation on and the increase in the membership of the Security Council for as long as it has existed. However, reform has been infrequent. The last increase in the membership of the Council occurred in 1965. At that time, there were 117 States Members of the United Nations; today, we number 193. That means that, in the past 50 years, the number of Member States has grown by 65 per cent, but the number of seats in the Security Council has increased by 0 per cent. Two implications of that trend are worth highlighting.

First, the size of the Security Council has not kept pace with the substantial increase in United Nations membership in the past half-century. Secondly, the representation on and size of the Security Council today are a reflection of the world that existed in 1965. There have been many changes in the international landscape since then. We have also seen the birth of dozens of new countries. Major shifts in global power among States are occurring, and economic power is being redistributed from the traditional centres to Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and other emerging economies.

New political and security challenges have also emerged since 1965. The Security Council has created new ways to deal with those multilayered threats. However, the Council is still trying to play an increasingly complicated game of chess with the same 15 pieces it had 50 years ago. That should be a source of concern for all of us in the Assembly.

It is clear that there are differences of opinion among us about how to increase the membership of the Security Council. But we can agree on the principle that there is a need and an urgency for reform. We need to accelerate the reform process, including an expansion of seats in both the permanent and non-permanent categories without an extension of the veto. All parties in today's debate should also recognize that the pressure to create a more representative and effective Council will only increase with each year that passes without reform. It is therefore critical for us to engage in a constructive dialogue, instead of repeating the same positions year after year. Singapore welcomes any initiative that constructively addresses the pressing

need for Security Council reform. In that regard, we have taken note of the President's establishment of an advisory group on Security Council reform and would be interested to learn more about it.

The goals of increased representation in and the effectiveness of the Council are not mutually exclusive. The last expansion, in 1965, did not degrade the Council's ability to function. Indeed, an expanded Council must also be a more efficient and effective Council. Those Powers that have or that seek a greater voice and representation in the Council must accept greater responsibilities for meeting global challenges and maintaining international peace and security. Those responsibilities include ensuring that the Council's working methods allow for a body that is more effective, inclusive, transparent and accountable to non-members.

The issue of the Council's working methods is important for small States, which make up a majority in the United Nations. Out of the 193 States Members of the United Nations, 105 are also members of the Forum of Small States. However, of the 70 States Members that have never been elected as members of the Security Council, 50 are small States. Many of us find it increasingly difficult to commit the necessary resources required to secure election to the Council, as campaigns for seats are becoming increasingly intensive and have to be planned years, or even decades, in advance.

Small States face unique challenges owing to the vulnerabilities associated with their size. It is important that our perspectives be represented in the Council, but the current system makes service on the Council for most of us a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Many of us may never even succeed in our bids to be elected to the Council.

However, given the fundamental differences of opinion, a reform of the membership of the Council may take considerable time. That makes it all the more important that working methods be improved so as to benefit all Member States, particularly those among us that will serve on the Council rarely, if at all. Singapore has constantly advocated improving the Council's working methods, independently and without prejudice to the other aspects of Council reform. Our statement in the recent Security Council debate on working methods detailed our views on working methods, including the use of the veto and the report of the Security Council (see S/PV.7052).

Mr. Weisleder (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica thanks the Ambassador of China and President of the Security Council for the month of November for his introduction of the Council's annual report (A/68/2) to the General Assembly. We also thank the delegation of the United States for its arduous work in drafting the introduction and the compilation of the report.

My delegation, as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, attaches special importance to this debate, because we believe that the task of improving the working methods of the Council and promoting its transparency and accountability are an ongoing process in which all Members of the Organization should be involved, quite aside from the differences we may have on the reform of the Security Council.

On the one hand, my delegation recognizes that some improvement has taken place in the preparation and the content of the Council's report. On the other hand, we continue to believe that the report could better reflect the problems, assessments and motives that have driven the Council's work during the period under examination. In that vein, the report we have before us is, as in pervious years, an extensive account of the work that took place throughout the reporting period, in this case from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013.

Costa Rica supports the idea that the annual report of the Security Council should include a high-quality analytical assessment of its work that would also discuss those cases in which the Council did not act, as well as the opinions of its members at the time when agenda items were actually considered. The continuing lack of any methodical or systematic analysis of the Council's work in its annual report to the Assembly is thus a symptom of serious disconnectedness and of the urgent need to improve its working methods. We also believe that its presentation should be conducive to a more analytical and interactive focus, one that looks to the future as well as referring to the past. Both retrospective and prospective focuses call for analysis that goes beyond simple narrative accounts.

Regarding agenda item 123, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, Costa Rica wishes to announce its interest and willingness to move forward on that very relevant topic. We share the views expressed by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for

Consensus Group (see A/68/PV.46), and reiterate our conviction that it is here, in the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations and with 193 Member States present, that positions on the issue of reform should be discussed and compared. My delegation therefore believes that the advisory group recently established by the President of the General Assembly should confine itself to offering advisory opinions to the President, if asked to do so. Costa Rica is firmly committed to the process and the importance of initiating negotiations in a climate of trust, transparency and mutual respect.

Security Council reform cannot be effective if it consists merely of increasing the privileges enjoyed by some and adding permanent seats for others. Costa Rica supports a modest increase in the number of non-permanent members, which would enable regions of the world to be better represented, particularly those that are currently poorly represented, such as Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa. Such a strategy would ensure that the broader membership retains its important oversight role and that the Council reflects the realities of our century, and would increase the proportion of elected members of Council and the opportunities for small and medium-szied States to be included in it. We are therefore in favour of introducing the principle of re-election, which would ensure the more frequent presence of States with the greatest willingness and availability to play an active role in the topics on the Council's agenda and at the same help to ensure non-permanent members' accountability. We would like to recall that election to the Council is not simply a privilege; it is a global responsibility.

Security Council reform demands flexibility and a spirit of inclusiveness on everyone's part. We reiterate our full readiness to participate in the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations and to collaborate constructively and purposefully in designing a process that will enable us to make progress at this defining moment for our Organization's future.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to express our support for the statement made by the representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Ambassador Delano Frank Bart, on behalf of the L.69 Group, the most representative, diverse and numerous group involved in these negotiations (see A/68/PV.46).

Nicaragua is very grateful to the President for convening this meeting, which is highly relevant to the intergovernmental negotiation process on the reforms that the Security Council needs. We are in full agreement with the President that United Nations reform is an important component in our efforts to strengthen the Organization, and we thank him for conducting extensive consultations designed to kick-start the process. We would like to acknowledge the initiative, creativity and commitment in the President's efforts to comply with the mandate of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) and other United Nations resolutions, particularly those on Security Council reform.

For more than 20 years, we have discussed and exchanged all possible opinions on reform. In the past five years, within this framework of intergovernmental negotiations, there have been nine rounds in which States have discussed their positions. The L.69 Group has clearly and repeatedly expressed the basis and fairness of our positions, which consolidate the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of Member States. And that is a fact.

We believe it is definitely time for all of us to intensify our efforts to move this process forward in a sustained and more structured way. In that context, we welcome the President's initiative of creating an advisory group for the President of the General Assembly to draft a negotiating text for the next round of intergovernmental negotiations, on 15 November. He can rely on our full cooperation. The text should reflect the wishes of the overwhelming majority calling for urgent reforms, particularly those involving increases in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories aimed at achieving a fair balance in the Council.

The enlargement of the permanent membership should take into account the equitable representation of all regions, particularly Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, which have always lacked fair representation on the Security Council. It is also essential that the negotiations enter a more dynamic phase in order to draft a concise working text, as the President has proposed, and thus achieve concrete results by 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

In conclusion, we wish to once again recognize the constructive, transparent role of Ambassador Tanin from the moment that responsibility was conferred on him by Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, and who since then has steered the intergovernmental process professionally, equitably and impartially. We

are pleased with his decision to continue leading the negotiations, bearing in mind the issue of institutional memory and Ambassador Tanin's continuing to chair the intergovernmental process. Nicaragua reiterates its support for Security Council reform to the President and to Ambassador Tanin, as well as our confidence in his leadership and ability to direct the process.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): It is an honour to speak before the General Assembly on such an important agenda item as the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. It is a pressing task at present to improve the work of the Security Council, which has the primary task of guaranteeing international peace and security.

The current Security Council does not reflect the unanimous will of the States Members of the United Nations in its membership, agenda or working methods. It is severely lacking in impartiality and democracy. That is the stark reality of today.

The high-handedness and arbitrariness of the super-Power on the Security Council has reached the reckless stage of depriving sovereign States of their legitimate rights to the peaceful use and development of outer space. One typical example is that the United States took the issue unlawfully to the Security Council when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea successfully launched a peaceful satellite in December 2012 in full compliance with international laws and regulations.

Since the foundation of the United Nations, there have been numerous satellite launches throughout the world. However, there has not been a single case of any satellite launch by an individual country being brought before the Security Council for consideration. Today, it is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea whose peace, security, dignity and sovereignty have been violated. But tomorrow it will be another country that becomes the victim of such high-handedness and arbitrariness.

It is essential to reform the Security Council as the impartial, objective and democratic organ of the United Nations in order to recover confidence in it and make it faithful to its primary mission of maintaining international peace and security. Twenty years have passed since the agenda item on Security Council reform was raised in the General Assembly. However, to date no progress has been made. That is because the issues related to international peace and security in the Security Council have been largely manipulated by the United States in pursuit of its own interests. To overcome such a problem, the following concrete measures should be taken in order to reform the Security Council.

First, the principles of impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity should be thoroughly observed in all activities of the Security Council. Impartiality and democracy are the bedrock of the work of the Security Council. If the Security Council continues to pursue its partial, selective and arbitrary practices in its decision-making process, it will never ever enjoy the trust and confidence of Member States.

First, the Security Council should reflect the demands and interests of all Member States by adopting new working methods on the basis of objectivity, rationality, non-selectivity and non-arbitrariness in its agenda, discussion and decision-making process. On the one hand, it is imperative that Security Council resolutions and decisions relating to sanctions and the use of force become effective only with the authorization of the General Assembly, since they have a serious impact on international peace and security. There should be a strict mechanism to that end.

On the other hand, the work of the Security Council should serve to enable the General Assembly to exercise its full powers and functions. The Council should not interfere in agenda issues related to the work and functions of the General Assembly, including socioeconomic issues and the activities of the humanitarian and development programmes of United Nations organizations.

Secondly, the current structure of the Security Council should be reformed. The representation of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and other developing countries should be increased in its membership in order to build confidence in and the accountability of the Security Council. At present, an increase in the permanent membership of the Security Council is impossible due to the serious disagreements existing between individual countries and regional groups. Therefore, the only viable solution to address the unbalanced and unreasonable structure of the Security Council is to first proceed with the enlargement of the non-permanent category of seats in the Security Council.

As far as increasing the permanent membership of the Security Council is concerned, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea makes its

principled position clear once again that Japan is totally unqualified to be a permanent member of the Security Council under any circumstances. Japan continues to deny its extraordinary war crimes against humanity, such as the massacre, plundering and invasion of neighbouring countries in the preceding century, which placed it under the shameful term of enemy State in the Charter of the United Nations.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is fully convinced that this plenary meeting will be a meaningful opportunity for paying due attention to the views of Member States and for taking practical measures towards Security Council reform.

Mr. Katota (Zambia): I thank the President for convening this meeting of the General Assembly on two important agenda items. I would also like to express our appreciation to the representative of China for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2). Let me also congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin on his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations and express our appreciation for his efforts during the previous session.

I wish to align myself with the statement delivered earlier today by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone and Coordinator of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council on behalf of the African Group (see A/68/PV.46).

Zambia would like to add its voice to Africa's call for the Security Council to be reformed in order for it to be all-embracing. For instance, in a game of chess, every piece is important. For someone to win, one has to pay particular attention to all the pieces. In that regard, we believe that Africa, as one piece in the game, was discarded and has long been forgotten. In terms of peace and security, everyone has to be on board no matter how small, how poor or how rich they may be.

The African common position is well known and has been supported by a large majority of Member States. Africa is not asking too much. As enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, the cry of Africa has been repeated time and again, namely, that Africa should be given at least two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of veto if it is continued, and two additional non-permanent seats.

It may be observed that most of the issues relating to international peace and security discussed in the Security Council involve Africa or are connected to it. The Security Council must therefore be more democratic, accountable, representative and inclusive, in line with the realities of these modern times. The enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership is long overdue, and Africa should be given its rightful place.

On the issue of the intergovernmental negotiations, Zambia is of the view that the process should be continued with a view to building alliances and making compromises as well as narrowing the divergence among Member States and interest groups. The negotiations require time, and they should be allowed to continue. However, the intergovernmental negotiations should be convened often. Otherwise, if they continue as they did during the previous session, they might turn out to be long and drawn out like the Open-Ended Working Group process before them.

Last but not least, we remain firmly convinced that Africa's common position continues to enjoy the broadest support from the majority of the Organization's membership, thereby retaining a viable role in the reform process.

Mr. Bamrungphong (Thailand): This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the amendment to the Charter of the United Nations that paved the way for the expansion of the non-permanent membership in the Security Council in 1965. The number of States Members of the United Nations has today increased to 193. Security Council reform is therefore absolutely necessary in order to bring the Council in line with present-day realities.

While Thailand fully supports a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, we are prepared to consider any idea or proposal that seeks to achieve a real reform of the Council. Thailand believes that priority should be given to, among other things, an improvement of the Council's working methods and its expansion, in order to ensure that the Council can become more effective, transparent and accountable and that its membership reflects the reality of the world in the twenty-first century. My delegation strongly believes that any expansion must be based on an equitable geographic representation. In that connection, we support Africa's call for more appropriate representation.

In spite of all the difficulties, complexities and sensitivities, Thailand remains optimistic about the

eventual realization of a reformed Security Council. At the same time, we remain realistic and pragmatic enough to consider all possible options, including the expansion of both categories of membership, as well as the so-called interim or intermediate solutions aimed at ensuring reform in the near future. In that connection, we support the proposal by Ambassador Tanin, Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, to discuss those intermediate options. It is unfortunate that during the ninth round of the negotiations we did not have an opportunity to discuss those options fully.

In fact, the idea of introducing a new category of Security Council membership is not new. A report produced by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565), also known as the Panyarachun report, was submitted to the General Assembly in 2004. It proposed, inter alia, the possible option of expanding the Council. We believe that those intermediate options should be given serious consideration in the next round of negotiations. I also wish to take this opportunity to welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

Thailand takes note of the establishment of an advisory group by the President of the General Assembly. We wish to seek further clarification on the mandate and role of such a body with respect to the membership-driven negotiations process. Such clarification will help us move forward. In that regard, we see an advantage of the advisory group in that it can offer a point of reference for the next round of the negotiations. Thailand would like to see fundamental progress in the Council's reform. In any case, we have to be mindful that any progress made should come from the intergovernmental negotiations themselves in order to ensure inclusive participation and achieve general agreement among Member States.

More than two decades have passed since the reform process began, in 1992. Member States need to work together in the spirit of compromise and flexibility in order to achieve a reform that is acceptable to all. We must not leave that burden to future generations. Let us hope that the next round of the intergovernmental negotiations will open a new chapter for genuine negotiation towards reform, which is indispensable, thereby ensuring greater representation, credibility, legitimacy and, above all, effectiveness of the Security Council.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela endorses the statement made this morning by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/68/PV.46). We are also grateful to the delegation of China for the introduction of the annual report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013 (A/68/2).

The move towards intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation and an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council, which took place after the adoption of decision 62/557, was the high point of the process to achieve Security Council reform. We cannot ignore the progress made over the past six years. Venezuela is grateful for the efforts of Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan, Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Venezuela is prepared to participate in real, substantive negotiations that are based on a text and are results-oriented, with a view to achieving significant reform in the short term.

However, my delegation recognizes that we are at a crossroads in the negotiation process. There are still persistent and deeply entrenched divergences among countries. The resolution guiding our negotiations is too long and, above all, we need guidance on how to proceed.

It would be very unfortunate for us to ignore the progress made and begin fresh talks, only to repeat the same old stances. We therefore welcome the timely and courageous decision by the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ashe, to convene a group of experienced people with extensive diplomatic skills to advise the Chair on this significant problem that we are all discussing. How should we proceed in the negotiation process? What is the best formula that will enable us to move towards a real negotiating text without any States feeling that their interests are being compromised? The advisory group in no way compromises the impartiality of the President in the negotiation process. Quite the contrary, its objective is to ensure that the President has at least one recommendation on how to act as impartially as possible when deciding what course of action to take. The content of that recommendation will not be substantive but procedural. I wish to assure my colleagues that the President has a responsibility to carry on with the process of reforming the Security Council. Seeking advise as to how best to proceed with that responsibility is one of his prerogatives. Venezuela

asks the President to carry on with his important work. We encourage him to continue to move forward.

The expansion of the membership of the Security Council and the reform of its working methods should lead to a more democratic, representative, transparent and effective Council. The reform process must be aimed at an expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. In that regard, we also need to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the African continent, comprising 54 countries, and rectify the historical injustice done when it comes to their lack of representation in the Council. African countries account for more than a quarter of the States Members of the Organization and represent more than two thirds of the items on the Security Council agenda.

Developing countries from the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia should also be included in the category of permanent members. Small island developing States should also be accorded representation. An arrangement of that kind would realize the legitimate aspiration of peoples in development, and it would respond to the appeals made to correct the imbalances of power within that organ.

To conclude, I would like to draw attention to one of the topics on which Venezuela places the greatest importance, namely, the urgent need for the Security Council to become a more transparent and inclusive body. In that regard, we reject the frequent practice of conducting closed meetings and informal consultations, as such meetings should be exceptions to the rule of holding public meetings, as stated in article 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. Venezuela therefore urges the Security Council to increase the proportion of open meetings, so that all Member States have an opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council.

Mr. Och (Mongolia): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/68/2).

Mongolia commends the Council for its critical work in discharging its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Over the reporting period, the Security Council adopted a number of momentous decisions, including resolutions 2086 (2013), 2098 (2013) and 2100 (2013), which recognized the crucial role of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and set out a new approach to peacekeeping operations. We also welcome the increased frequency of open debates in the Council on matters pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The efforts made by the Security Council to improve its cooperation with the troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and the Secretariat, particularly the work of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations**,** have helped in considering the question of inter-mission cooperation and in addressing issues concerning the safety and security of peacekeepers. Having recognized those positive developments, we wish to note that the Council has yet to explore avenues for further enhancing its work in that area, including through deepening a common understanding on policy matters and ensuring wider participation by TCCs in decision-making processes.

My delegation wishes to underline the concrete measures aimed at improving the working methods of the Security Council. In that respect, Mongolia welcomes the open debates in the Council held on 26 November 2012 (see S/PV.6870), and, more recently, on 29 October 2013 (see S/PV.7052), on its working methods, including improvements in its engagement with other United Nations organs, regional organizations and TCCs. We also welcome the progress made in implementing the measures contained in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507), and thank the members of the Council for convening wrap-up private meetings, to which non-members of the Council have been invited.

On the question of Security Council reform, since the adoption of decision 62/557, of 15 September 2008, nine rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have been conducted under the stewardship of Ambassador Zahir Tanin, whom we sincerely congratulate on his recent reappointment. My delegation welcomes decision 67/561 to immediately continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary format at the General Assembly during the sixty-eighth session. We appreciate the President's pledge and efforts to advance the reform processes in all the principal organs of the United Nations during the current session.

As we approach the next round of intergovernmental negotiations at this session, Mongolia wishes to echo the position expressed by many delegations, namely, that in order to resume the intergovernmental process early, we need a concise and manageable timetable in order to embark upon genuine reform-related negotiations. In

that respect, my delegation is hopeful that the initiative of the President will be supported by Member States.

Mongolia's stance on Security Council reform is well known. We have consistently stood for a just and equitable enlargement of that body through an increase in the numbers of both permanent and non-permanent members, while ensuring the due representation of developing and developed countries. My delegation reiterates Mongolia's support for Japan, Germany and India, which, we believe, are able to shoulder greater responsibility in pursuit of international peace, security and development. Permanent seats should also be allocated to Latin America and Africa in a reformed Security Council. Our stance for enlargement in both current categories is guided by, and based on, the relevant provisions regarding the Council's composition laid down in the Charter of the United Nations and the political realities of today's world, as well as the principles of justice and equality to ensure greater and enhanced representation of the developing countries, particularly the non-members and underrepresented regional groups.

Enlargement is not, however, a goal in itself. The expanded Security Council must be fully equipped to react coherently and effectively to crises and conflicts, and be able to take decisions, particularly on matters relating to Chapter VII of the Charter. We believe that the veto power should be thoroughly reviewed, and efforts should be made to turn the Council into a more democratic institution.

Finally, I welcome the President's decision to make the reform of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, one of his priorities. I also express my delegation's sincere hope that, with the President's strong leadership, this session will make meaningful progress towards early Council reform, as mandated by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit.

Mr. Petersen (Denmark): At the outset, my delegation would like to join others in thanking the President of the General Assembly, Mr. John Ashe, for calling this timely meeting. That action on his part demonstrates his commitment to United Nations reform, which, as was noted in his acceptance speech earlier this year, represents an important element in our overall efforts to strengthen the Organization (see A/67/PV.87).

My delegation also congratulates Ambassador Zahir Tanin on his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. Ambassador Tanin has conducted the negotiations so far with impeccable efficiency and impartiality. He can rely on the full support of Denmark as we continue to advance the process of Security Council reform.

Denmark remains firmly committed to comprehensive Security Council reform, an essential complement of the overall reform of the United Nations. Progress is needed to strengthen the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization as a whole. To do so, the Security Council must reflect the realities of today and the emerging international order of tomorrow. The ultimate goal is a reform that is comprehensive in nature and that increases the Council's ability to discharge its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council must continue to play a decisive global role in the promotion of peace, security, human rights and democracy. To do so more effectively, broader representation is needed. Denmark remains committed to an enlargement of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, including both developing and developed countries as new permanent members. The goal is to enhance the legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the Council.

Furthermore, it is essential that small States be given an opportunity to participate in the work of the Security Council and to serve as members of the Council. That also relates to improving the working methods of the Council, thus ensuring maximum transparency and interaction with the Member States not serving as members of the Council.

Denmark remains committed to moving the process forward. We are encouraged by the recent initiative by the President of the Assembly to establish an advisory group of permanent representatives. We believe that the group should provide substantial and tangible ideas and recommendations on how to move the process forward and, in that regard, serve as valuable input for the start of concrete intergovernmental negotiations.

Before long, we will celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and, at the same time, mark the tenth anniversary of the 2005 World Summit, where world leaders supported an early reform of the Security Council. We believe the time has come to deliver on our promises and to live up to our responsibility as Member States. Reform is and must be a top priority for everyone committed to

effective international cooperation and multilateralism. We believe that reform can be achieved. We will continue to offer the President our support and to engage constructively in our common endeavours to achieve that goal.

Mr. Patriota (Brazil): I express my thanks to the President for convening today's important debate in the broader setting of the General Assembly. We are confident that, under his determined guidance, we will be able to make progress towards a more representative, legitimate, efficient, effective, transparent and accountable Security Council.

Brazil aligns itself with the statements delivered at the 46th meeting by Ambassador Motohide Yoshikawa, Permanent Representative of Japan, on behalf of the Group of Four, and by Ambassador Delano Frank Bart, Permanent Representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis, on behalf of the L.69 Group.

I also take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of China and President of the Security Council for the month of November, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2) at this morning's meeting (see A/68/PV.46).

After less than two months in office, the President's commitment to move the Security Council reform process forward has already been made evident. In that regard, I feel greatly honoured to be part of his advisory group, together with five other ambassadors. Under the coordination of Ambassador Noel Sinclair, the President's wise and experienced Deputy Chef de Cabinet, we are committed to advise the President on the production of "a basis for the start of intergovernmental negotiations that reflects the ideas put forward in the negotiations so far, and also identifies available options", a quote from the President's letter dated 22 October to all Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. That statement, together with the framework established by decision 62/557 and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), represents a platform to carry out that task.

I would also like to welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as the Chair of intergovernmental negotiations. In the past five years, Ambassador Tanin has undertaken tireless efforts to move the process forward and has proved to be a capable facilitator.

As reflected in the report presented this morning, the work undertaken by the Council between 1 August 2012 and 31 July 2013, ranging from the situation in Syria to the challenges in Africa and from the protection of civilians in armed conflict to the management of the several sanctions regimes, is indicative of the serious, diverse and complex challenges facing the Security Council. The Council's inability to provide a concrete solution to the deadlock in Syria, and the sovereign decision of a Member State to decline the seat to which it was elected, are clear and worrying reminders of the need to update our collective security operational framework. We commend the President for pointing out in his acceptance speech on 14 June that, without an overall effort to strengthen the United Nations, the Organization runs the risk of becoming inconsequential (see A/67/PV.86). No single Member of the United Nations today questions the necessity and urgency of reform. Today's debate provides us with a new opportunity to start to address the deficit in representativeness and legitimacy that are preventing the Security Council from fulfilling its role.

The sooner we accomplish our task, the better the Council will be able to respond to the complexities of contemporary international challenges. That is why many among us believe that the year 2015 presents a suitable time frame for achieving a concrete outcome. The year 2015 marks the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and represents 10 years since the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which our Heads of State and Heads of Government unanimously underlined their support for an early reform of the Security Council. Surely, after two decades of debates, we must reject any attempts at artificially delaying the task we have been entrusted with. We must reject the artificial objection to timelines in the light of the clear instruction given to us by our Heads of State and Heads of Government in 2005.

Brazil is eager to contribute to the urgent reform of the Security Council by concentrating on the options — as regards the five key issues listed in decision 62/557 that enjoyed the support of a vast majority. Let us remind ourselves that, in every democratic decision-making process, consensus is built around majority views. A good starting point would be to recognize that the overwhelming majority of Member States support enlargement in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

The Council's ability to adequately address challenges to international peace and security directly affects the lives of millions of people around the world. In that sense, we must be aware not only of the importance of reforming the Security Council for enhancing intergovernmental cooperation on the promotion of peace and security in the twenty-first century, but also beyond these walls for societies at large. The persistence of the status quo confronts us with a shared responsibility in the face of potential systemic failure.

Brazil believes that the opportunity for reform is now at hand and must be faced with a renewed sense of individual and collective responsibility. We trust in the President's leadership to guide us through this critical exercise for each of our countries and for the future of the United Nations.

Mr. Hetesy (Hungary): Hungary concurs with the assessment that the reform process should continue and must be reinvigorated. Hungary therefore warmly welcomes the decision to reappoint His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as Chair of intergovernmental negotiations.

In a similar vein, Hungary also supports the initiative to establish an advisory group of the President in order to produce a basis that reflects the ideas put forward in the negotiations and that identifies the available options before us. We are satisfied with the clarifications provided on the role of the advisory group this morning.

As far as the intergovernmental negotiations are concerned, it is time to break the cycle of repeated rounds of discussions, where national positions are simply stated and restated, again and again. We therefore commend the initiative of the President and urge all countries to seize the momentum.

The creation of a Security Council that is broadly representative, efficient and transparent is not only in the best interest of the international community; it is also our shared responsibility. In order to join forces with other countries in trying to find ways and means out of the current deadlock, let me put forward the views of Hungary.

First, the Security Council has to be enlarged to better reflect of the current state of affairs. Such enlargement should be guided by the principle of equitable geographical representation of all regional groups, including the Eastern European Group, and should reflect the political and socioeconomic changes. Countries such as Germany, India, Japan and Brazil, which have indicated their readiness to shoulder higher responsibilities, have to be granted that opportunity.

Secondly, enlargement is not the answer to all of the challenges that the Security Council is facing today. The Council has to become more accountable and its work more coherent and more transparent in order to fulfil its ultimate responsibility, that is, the protection of international peace and security.

Thirdly, with regard to peace and security, the existence of peaceful, resilient and inclusive societies is a clear prerequisite for universal sustainable development, which in turn is the basis for lasting international peace and security. That understanding will have to be translated into new types of improved interaction between the Council and other United Nations bodies. Thinking and acting in silos will not get us closer to solutions to multifaceted challenges.

Fourthly, the world and the nature of its challenges have changed significantly. Therefore, the Council and its working methods cannot remain static. The mere fact that after more than 67 years the most powerful international body still uses its provisional rules of procedure confirms that there is room for improvement.

It is true that there are different national interests and group interests when it comes to Security Council reform. It is also true that all interests are legitimate. The question is, how can we cater to those different interests? In the humble opinion of Hungary, it is possible. It can be done if we accept that inaction is not an option. It can be done by balancing national interests with international responsibilities. And it can be done if we change our so-called rules of engagement. The lamentable fact is that in the field of Security Council reform, until now we have built camps instead of building consensus. Zero-sum games will not yield results. Therefore, we have to enter into text-based and results-oriented negotiations whereby win-win situations can carry the day.

Hungary is ready to move forward with the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform process without preconditions.

On the report of the Security Council (A/68/2), Hungary hopes to take the floor when it comes up again for discussion. As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Hungary firmly

believes that working methods, including the report of the Council, should also be given adequate time and consideration. That issue also deserves our full and undivided attention.

Mrs. Perceval (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Here we are at this important debate, and I wonder what our state of mind is and what is our state of awareness. At times, some may be sceptical, feeling that this is just one more meeting and that nothing will change. Perhaps others fall victim to resignation, sometimes called pragmatism, accepting that if we are to achieve anything at all it will be merely whatever is possible. Perhaps some perceive it as effective to move forward with an arithmetic exercise — adding to some, taking away from many — and not to exhaust ourselves by pursuing substantive change, which would be not only complex but also unnecessary in this era of globalization.

Finally, there are others who believe that we must respond, rising to our times and our responsibilities in the face of the challenges that bring us together, by pursuing a paradigm shift that is not merely formal or arithematical but fundamentally substantive and that is coherently linked with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and with genuine multilateralism, that moves beyond the Cold War era, and that is based not on countries' gross domestic product or military might, but on the equality of all Member States.

With all due respect to those who believe in good faith that there is *nihil novum sub solis* and that what has been will continue to be the destiny of humankind and of our Organization, let me remind them of what poet Julio Cortázar wrote in order to overcome hopelessness, that nowadays there is a chorus of voices echoing: "There is nothing new under the neon light".

To those who sincerely believe that our broadest horizon is what is pragmatically possible, I invite them to ask themselves who defines a proposal or reality as possible, and why. At the same time, who is it that defines what is impossible, that is, unimaginable, unthinkable or unacceptable? Here let us recall that Auschwitz or Hiroshima were thought impossible, just as women's rights and the end of slavery and of the injustice of colonialism were declared unthinkable and unacceptable.

In response to the worthy belief that international peace and security can be protected with the same rules of the game and that all that has to be done is to increase the number of members, I would respectfully point out that more members doing the same thing in the same way is what is known as the fallacy of domestic analogy. In practice, this would be to expand in order to maintain the status quo — a status quo that today, no matter what positions we may have, we all agree is rigid and outdated.

What other transcendent purpose could the Security Council have in fulfilling the mandate entrusted to it in the Charter if it is not the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security not as an end in itself, but so that dignity, freedom, equality and all human rights may be enjoyed by all persons? It is true that this is a sovereign obligation of all States. But it is also a responsibility erga omnes of all the organs of the Organization, and therefore also of the Security Council, binding on States not only with regard to their own peoples, but to all the peoples and all human beings of the world.

It is in the context of the progressive universality of fundamental rights and non-hegemonic multilateral cooperation that Argentina is working, with humility and dedication, to achieve for all a Security Council that is more democratic, truly inclusive and efficient — a Council that conducts its work with responsibility and without privileges, with votes and without vetoes. We do so because we believe that here in the United Nations, from our enriching plurality and inspiring diversity, we have always striven put an end to the law of the strongest.

I thank the President of the Security Council for November, Ambassador Liu Jieyi, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2). I also thank the delegation of the United States for coordinating the drafting of the report.

The delegation of Argentina associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus Group (see A/68/PV.46).

We reaffirm that the negotiations in the General Assembly on Security Council reform are based on specific norms aimed at seeking a solution that can obtain the broadest political acceptance possible. Likewise, we agree that these negotiations should cover the five key issues already identified, while avoiding a focus on any of them in a partial and isolated manner. Argentina wishes to reiterate, along with other members

of Uniting for Consensus, that we should work towards a coherent solution consistent with what we agreed on unanimously more than 20 years ago. That means not that countries need to put aside our national positions, but that we must bear in mind the positions of the entire membership and try to reach a legitimate agreement.

That is why it is essential that any initiative on Security Council reform respect the principles of transparency, good faith, mutual respect, openness and inclusivity. We know that these negotiations are by their very nature intergovernmental and that we as Member States should carry them out and reach the necessary agreements.

In that connection, Argentina shares the concern expressed by the Permanent Representative of Italy regarding the recent decision to create an advisory group. It must be pointed out that the advisory group, as a consultative body for the President of the General Assembly, does not have, nor could it have, any negotiating role. The intergovernmental negotiations are the only forum qualified to take substantive and procedural decions on Council reform. Therefore, my delegation deems it inappropriate for the advisory group to prepare a document to serve as the basis for negotiations, since it is States that participate in these negotiations and that should prepare that document. Those criteria were shared by the President of the General Assembly at our meeting yesterday.

During the ninth round of intergovernmental negotiations and previously in the Open-ended Working Group, we agreed on the need for an urgent and broad reform of the Security Council in order to make it legitimate again and to make it more representative, democratic and effective. We also considered strengthening its regional dimension. It is essential for Africa to be adequately represented in the Council, correcting the historic injustice of underrepresentation of that continent. Increasing Africa's representation in the Council in accordance with the criteria proposed by Uniting for Consensus will benefit all 54 members of the African Group and will prevent the maintaining or deepening the great inequalities within the Council.

Several proposals have been made to reform the Security Council, but none has yet led to a general agreement. The President has suggested that we work to reach a common position. Argentina has upheld that conduct in previous debates. We are aware that reforms should reflect Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which says that the Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.

Finally, bearing in mind the experience acquired during this prolonged negotiation process, Argentina is prepared to find innovative solutions that will ensure a more democratic presence, improve the rotation of non-permanent members and revise the working methods so that the Council becomes genuinely more transparent, interactive and inclusive.

Argentina does not favour increasing the number of permanent members of the Council, since we believe that that would not ensure greater participation by those not represented in it today. My country believes that a comprehensive reform of the Council should eliminate privileges for a few and ensure equal rights for all.

We will work to consider intermediate solutions, which is not the same as interim solutions. It is not just in the framework of these intergovernmental negotiations that we raise this need; we have also done so as a member of the Council. Today, as a member of the Council and as Chair of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, we were able to approve the presidential notes contained in documents S/2013/515 and S/2013/630.

We know that working methods are important, but we also know that they are one chapter, just one. We are lagging too far behind. We know that the road is difficult and complex. Let us try not turn it into a dead end because of our uncertainties, our scepticism, our particular interests and our intransigence. Argentina is commited to working more constructively to achieve reform with the President, with Ambassador Tanin and with all States Members of the United Nations.

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): I wish to express our deepest appreciation to Ambassador Liu Jieyi, current President of the Security Council, for preparing and introducing the report of the Security Council (A/68/2) under this agenda item. We thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan for his dedicated efforts during the past session as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform and congratulate him on his reappointment to lead the negotiations.

Sixty-eight years ago, we reaffirmed our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. We established the Organization while reaffirming the fundamental principle of the equality of all its Members. The

Organization shone as a beacon of hope in the darkness of war and poverty. It stood for international peace, an arena where every person, regardless of race, class or belief, was heard, and for international cooperation to achieve freedom from want and freedom from fear.

Yet today, the Organization's biggest challenge is to remain relevant, not because its aims and objectives have been deemed irrelevant, but because the power dynamics within the United Nations governance system do not represent its increased membership, nor do they reflect the realities of the world we live in today.

The Maldives has been at the forefront of calls for reforming the Security Council since 1979. Like other Member States, the Maldives is of the view that a comprehensive reform and expansion of the Security Council are essential to making the Security Council democratic in composition, effective in decision-making and accountable to the general membership. We believe that Council reform should transcend current global power politics and that decisions need to reflect the collective will of the general membership.

Reform should not only be based on contemporary realities but should also take into account the outcome of the Council's decisions. Making the Council more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to its decision-making process, is vital to adapting the United Nations to the global realities of the twenty-first century. It should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Maldives believes that the expanded membership of the Security Council should come from both developing and developed countries, including from small States, and that it should include the participation of countries so as to reflect the diverse membership of the United Nations. We believe that such an expansion should include Japan and India among the permanent members. Geographic representation on its own should not be a deciding factor in determining permanent membership in the Council. Other considerations, such as a country's ability to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy, should be taken on board as well.

Concurrently with but separate from the debate on the long-term reform of the Security Council, the Council's current functioning and working methods are key focus areas for the Maldives. As part of the cross-regional accountability, coherence and transparency group, the Maldives firmly believes that those three aspects are key traits that need to be reflected in the Council's work and in its relationship with the General Assembly today.

According to the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council acts on behalf of all of the Member States. Members are mandated to accept and carry out the Council's decisions. Therefore, the request of Member States to be informed and, to the extent possible, be involved in the decision-making process is legitimate. Every Member State has that right and responsibility, which generates more credibility for the Council and more ownership of its decisions. Moreover, the Council would undoubtedly benefit from a wide range of ideas and the support of the membership.

We are heartened that, during the reporting period, the Council endeavoured to hold more public meetings and wrap-up meetings in an effort to increase its transparency. We are also encouraged by the monthly briefings by Council Presidents on the Council's work. However, we ask both members and non-members of the Council to critically and proactively reflect on the month's work in the wrap-up meetings. We also ask that the disparity between the permanent and non-permanent members be eliminated. It remains a fundamental flaw in that some negotiations and briefings have been limited to the permanent members alone.

The Maldives remains wholeheartedly committed to this process and calls for flexibility and the broadest possible political acceptance in proceeding with the negotiations. We must be united in bringing the intergovernmental negotiations forward and finding a solution that is acceptable to all. It is our earnest hope that consensus will be reached in that way.

The Maldives is a firm believer in the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We are a staunch supporter of democracy, the rule of law, equality and justice. We believe in the purposes of the United Nations and that the world needs such an Organization today more than ever. However, to fulfil its promise to live up to the expectations of its Members and of every citizen it represents, and to deal with the complex challenges of the world we live in, the Organization must take drastic measures to remain relevant by reforming itself.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I thank the President for convening this important annual debate on the two interconnected issues, namely, the report of the Security Council (A/68/2) and Security Council reform.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/68/PV.46).

We thank Ambassador Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of China and current President of the Security Council, for introducing the Council's annual report covering the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013.

The Security Council is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security by the whole of the United Nations. The Council thus has the responsibility to inform all Member States of its deliberations, decisions and actions in a meaningful, open and transparent manner. The Council's annual report is a constructive effort towards that end. However, in addition to useful information and the chronology of events contained in the document, a more analytical report, providing the rationale behind the Council's decisions and explanations when action by the Council was not possible, would have enhanced the understanding of the wider membership.

Indonesia notes the Council's good efforts on making its meetings more accessible to the broader United Nations membership. We also appreciate its seriousness in defusing numerous challenges to international peace and security. However, on certain issues the Council's inaction threatens regional and global peace and the norms set out in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and humanitarian law.

In that regard, it is a matter of urgency that the Council address the question of Palestine fairly. We sincerely hope that the Council can be on the right side of history by enabling the realization of the legitimate, inalienable rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people. The conflict in Syria, with its continuing bloodshed, is another very serious situation awaiting the Council's immediate action. Indonesia reiterates its call for an immediate cessation of all violence by all sides, for ensuring impartial and effective aid delivery to those in urgent need and for the promotion of an inclusive political process that reflects the wishes of all the Syrian people.

As called for by world leaders in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), the early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of the overall effort to reform of the United Nations so as to make the Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and thus to enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. Indonesia fully supports collective efforts towards realizing that noble goal at the earliest possible date. That is why we also favour the early convening of the annual debate today.

My delegation welcomes the reappointment of His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin as the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We hope that under his able stewardship, supported by the political will of all countries, we will be able to make progress on vital issues on which convergence has so far eluded us.

Indonesia notes the President's decision to invite six permanent representatives to serve on an advisory group. Although we see the rationale for establishing that group in the context of contributing positively to the process, it is crucial to ensure that the nature of intergovernmental negotiations as a process driven by Member States is respected and upheld. That also means that the principles of inclusivity, transparency and the broadest possible acceptance are at the forefront of any initiatives that may affect the course of the negotiations. Indonesia emphasizes that the voice of every State is equally important in all matters pertaining to Council reform. It is necessary that all the positions of the Member States, not just those of groupings, be reflected in any basis for negotiations.

Indonesia's perspective on Council reform has been mentioned on numerous occasions. We underscore that, to better reflect today's realities, the Council needs to be more effective, accountable, democratic and representative of the world's plurality. In striving for reform, we must uphold the integrity of the consensus-based decision 62/557 by ensuring that the reform will be comprehensive. Any approaches that address only selected issues out of the five key issues should be avoided. We reiterate that the reform should be based on a true consensus, or at least on the greatest possible political acceptance, well beyond the two-thirds majority.

Although the deliberations at the sixty-seventh session were essential, they did not bring us closer to convergence. There remain fundamental differences as

to the membership, categories, size and veto. In the light of that fact, Indonesia deems it timely that Ambassador Tanin's proposal to further discuss intermediate models, which might provide a middle way forward, be considered as well.

In conclusion, I would like to underline Indonesia's commitment to continuing to work closely with all Member States in order to achieve a tangible reform of the Council.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): We are especially thankful for the President's convening of this meeting to debate agenda item 29, concerning the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2), and agenda item 123, concerning Security Council reform. We are also grateful to the representative of China, as President of the Security Council, for introducing the Council's annual report, and to the President for his personal commitment to advancing the cause of the Security Council reform during the Assembly's sixty-eighth session.

Nigeria remains committed in its desire for an inclusive, comprehensive and holistic reform of the Security Council in terms of its size, scope and composition. The 1965 reform of the Council, despite the best of intentions, was carried out to the exclusion of the majority of the current States Members of the United Nations. Indeed, the process addressed only the expansion of the Council in the non-permanent category. The search for an effective way to address those factors has informed Nigeria's active participation in the intergovernmental negotiations process.

While we welcome the appointment of an advisory group to advise the President on that very important matter, we also wish to observe that its work should not be definitive and should not supplant the work of intergovernmental negotiations, which, as its name suggests, is intergovernmental and sanctioned by Member States. It is our expectation that substantial progress will be achieved during the current session under the leadership of President Ashe. We believe that the time has come for us to achieve concrete results on those elements in which consensus has emerged during the negotiations. That is underscored by the fact that the majority of Member States crave a timely reform of the Security Council in accordance with the objectives set out by the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) and the 2000 Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2).

The current underrepresentation of Africa is a lucid demonstration of the lack of equity in the Security Council. A region with 54 States Members of the United Nations remains unrepresented in the permanent category of membership in the Council. Nor has it fared any better in the non-permanent category, where it has only three seats. Any proposals that seek to jeopardize Africa's legitimate demand for representation in the permanent member category will meet neither global expectations nor, for that matter, Africa's aspirations. The inclusion of other regions, such as the Latin American and Caribbean States, the Asian region and the small island developing States, currently also underrepresented in each category, should also be given the deserved consideration. We therefore support a comprehensive reform in both categories to reflect current global realities.

As stakeholders, we must collectively strive to bridge the apparent gaps created by our differing views. The negotiating process should remain open, transparent and inclusive and should be conducted in a spirit of flexibility that facilitates the attainment of a compromise solution. To that end, the preponderance of views and positions expressed by Member States, including Nigeria, is for an expansion of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

The reform of the Council's working methods is another area that requires attention, particularly with regard to transparency and accountability. During its horizon-scanning, special care must be employed to operate within the principles of good-neighbourliness, and especially with respect for the independence and sovereignty of all Member States in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and extant rules of international law. We acknowledge efforts in that direction but maintain that there is scope for improvement. Similarly, we support an enhanced relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, also in accordance with Charter provisions.

We ardently believe that cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations should be an ongoing and dynamic process so that the benefits of such cooperation can be reaped in the maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore advocate closer cooperation between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council, under Charter

provisions, to more effectively address and implement strategic decisions.

Let me assure all Member States that Nigeria will guard and protect the mandate that it has been given to return to the Security Council and place it in the service not only of Africa but of the entire international community. Our efforts in the Council will be characterized by solidarity, cooperation, commitment and consultation. We believe that through forthright determination we can all stand and muster the desired political will that will lead to the achievement of a reformed Security Council. We have spoken exhaustively on the issue. It is time to put our words into action without vacillation. All Member States have a stake in the maintenance of international peace and security. We must remain active participants in the process.

Mr. Spinellis (Greece): I would like first of all to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his decision to reappoint Ambassador Tanin as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the issue of Security Council reform. It is everyone's hope and belief that the intergovernmental negotiations process will achieve a much-needed breakthrough, escaping finally from the well of stagnation to its long-sought fruitful outcome. My country is prepared to work constructively in promoting our common endeavour.

My country's stand on the issue of Security Council reform has been very clearly expressed on multiple occasions. We are in favour of expanding the Council in both existing categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, and of improving its working methods. We hope that it can be achieved without the issue of the veto impeding progress in any of the key issues of reform.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed time and time again a never-ending reiteration of already well-known positions. Many diverging views were expressed, which were all deserving and of merit and included useful arguments that should always be borne in mind.

However, the discussion phase of the negotiations has gone on for too long. I am confident that we all stand united when we say that it is high time for the reform process to move forward in a concrete way. The reform has to become an objective within reach. The stalemate has to come to an end. It is with that vital necessity in mind that we welcome and support the President's decision to establish an advisory group to reflect the ideas put forward in the negotiations thus far and to highlight the options available. We believe that this initiative could actually create the highly sought-after momentum necessary to break out of the stalemate.

In concluding, I would like to express my country's steadfast conviction that we can achieve concrete progress during the current session. Reforming the Security Council is more urgent today than ever before, and becomes even more urgent with every passing day, as the Council must meet the challenges posed by global realities that have outpaced it over the past 50 years. Compromising its legitimacy and efficiency is not an option. Let us be flexible and pragmatic, bridge our differences and get the job done.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the opportunity offered to us in this joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/68/2) and on the question of Security Council reform.

In connection with the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly covering the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013, I welcome the statement by the Permanent Representative of China as President of the Council, and I thank the United States for the preparation of the introduction.

Spain attaches great importance to good interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. The cooperation between the two principal organs of the United Nations must be improved. It is therefore essential to ensure a high level of transparency in the Council's work and greater participation by all Member States in the Council's activities and decisions, especially on issues that directly affect them. Only thus will the essential political and moral authority of the Security Council be reinforced. I believe we are headed in the right direction, but I encourage Member States to continue to adapt the work of the Council to the demands of an international society that is increasingly democratic and dynamic.

I turn now to the question of Security Council reform. The Spanish delegation fully endorses the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus Group (see A/68/PV.46), and I would like to make the following comments in my national capacity.

I want to express Spain's gratitude for the interest with which the President of the General Assembly

has dealt with an item of such priority on the United Nations agenda. We are operating on the basis of our shared conviction that the reform of the Security Council should not be delayed much longer. The organ with the primary responsibilty for the maintenance of international peace and security must adapt to the demands of the twenty-first century, which are radically different from the circumstances at the time of the Organization's birth, in 1945.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations have without doubt remained the same from the very beginning of the Organization to today. However, achieving them requires a revitalization or reform of its principal organs, which, in the case of the Security Council, means, among other important aspects, an expansion that allows for greater participation by Members of the Organization. International peace and security are everyone's responsibility, and thus all of us as Member States are lawfully called on to increase our participation in the work of ensuring that they are maintained.

The process leading to Security Council reform should scrupulously comply with the procedures that the General Assembly has laid out in the exercise of its legal atributes. All opinions are, without a doubt, equally worthy of respect. All must be heard and taken into account, and we must all work to achieve a convergence between them that leads us to a successful reform of the Security Council — because, members will agree, it will not do to have just any reform.

It would not do, for example, to have a reform that disregards the legitimate aspirations of African countries as a whole for greater representation and more weight in the Security Council. That is precisely one of the key elements that we must be able to ensure. The reform would also be a failure if it disregarded the aspirations of small countries to be able to increase their chances of serving on the Council. It would be born lacking the necessary legitimacy if it were implemented against the will of countries that have large populations and a significant international impact.

The challenge is to achieve a Security Council that is more democratic and inclusive. That task is absolutely incumbent upon everyone and should be facilitated by the President of the General Assembly, John Ashe, and the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Zahir Tanin. I greet both of them warmly. I wish them much success in this new phase, and I assure them that they will always be able to count on the Permanent Representative of Spain having a positive attitude in this process.

Our common goal must be to achieve a reform that reasonably satisfies all Members of the Organization and that guarantees that absolutely all of us win. To that end, it is indispensable — but not sufficient — that we stick to the rules set out in decision 62/557.

I would now like to refer to the letter from President Ashe dated 22 October, which is incontestable proof of his commendable desire to make progress in the reform of the Council. As the Uniting for Consensus Group expressed in its letter dated 31 October, his decision, without prior notice, to create an advisory group gave us great pause and was cause for concern, because we did not understand the nature of his goals. Subsequent public interpretations of his ultimate aim added strong concern to our initial bewilderment. We therefore welcome the explanations President Ashe provided to us during the meeting he agreed to have with Uniting for Consensus yesterday, in kind response to our request.

He confirmed to us the purely consultative nature of the support mechanism that he has established for himself as President of the General Assembly. He also assured us that the group lacked a negotiating role and that its mandate was not to prepare any kind of document to serve as a basis for the intergovernmental negotiations. In other words, the advisory group will not circumvent the intergovernmental negotiations — indeed, it cannot be otherwise. Relieved by that explanation, we will closely follow the group's proceedings.

I would like to conclude by affirming that the General Assembly can count on Spain as a delegation that is ready to negotiate. We believe that the position of the Uniting for Consensus group best meets the aspirations of the vast majority of Members of the Organization. For that reason, we not only support debate but also aspire to being able to draw many members to our position.

Mr. Khiari (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We hope that, with the guidance of the President of the General Assembly and the unfailing and valuable cooperation of Ambassador Tanin, we can help to establish a firm basis for this session to move towards or to reach an agreement that deserves the support of the entire membership of the Organization. We will all be most grateful to them for that.

Mr. Maope (Lesotho): I thank the President for convening this important meeting. Allow me to thank the Permanent Representative of China, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November, for introducing the report of the Council (A/68/2) before this body (see A/68/PV.46). I also thank the United States for preparing the introduction of the report at hand.

I align myself with the statements delivered at this morning's meeting by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone and Egypt on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively. I wish to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Having listened to the presentation of the report of the Security Council on its activities from August 2012 to July 2013, one is inclined to acknowledge that, indeed, the peace that our forebears sought by creating the United Nations 68 years ago is yet to become a reality. The prevalence of political instability and armed conflicts, as highlighted in the report, continues to contribute more to the global socioeconomic decline and the suffering of our peoples. However, it is encouraging to note that the Security Council remained resolute in discharging its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations during the reporting period.

My delegation notes with appreciation the fact that the quality of the annual reports of the Council continues to improve. We can only encourage the Council to further enhance the quality of future annual reports, as appropriate. Allow me to make the following few points, which my delegation considers pertinent in that endeavour.

The introduction of the Council's annual reports to the General Assembly must be seen not only as a fulfilment of Charter obligations but also, most important, as the provision of a platform for all Member States to present their views on how the Council could further enrich the way in which it conducts its business. It is the view of my delegation that the reports of the Council should be not only a recitation of events and meetings that took place during a given period, as well as the action taken. They should also be more analytical and expound on the challenges that the Council faces in the execution of its mandate and how it proposes to solve them.

Furthermore, we note that there has been an increase in the number of public meetings held during the period in question. While that is a welcome step, we are concerned that there seems to be no elaboration on what impact, if any, those public meetings have had on the work of the Council. Public meetings are not held merely for the sake of accommodating non-Council members. The general views of non-Council members that participated in such meetings and the extent to which such views have been of value to the work of the Council must be clearly articulated.

As a way of improving engagement with the general United Nations membership and other stakeholders, we propose that the Council should consider utilizing other platforms, such as Arria Formula meetings. That will promote transparency, and thus bridge differences between Member States and the Council. The Security Council, which acts on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations, should ensure that the voices of those that it represents are not only heard but also heeded.

The importance of the Council undertaking field missions cannot be overemphasized. Such missions afford the Council opportunities to relate to the facts on the ground in respect of the situations before it. We encourage the Council to continue such missions and to increase them in number, as appropriate. We hope that that practice will assist the Council in making informed decisions.

We note that the Council's agenda continues to be dominated by peace and security issues in Africa. As such, we call for a stronger partnership and collaboration between the Council and the African Union, in line with the Charter of the United Nations. The primacy of the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security is beyond dispute. Nevertheless, increased support for African ownership of peace initiatives on the continent is desirable. Cooperation between both institutions should be based on mutual respect and complementarity. That partnership should be viewed in its wider strategic context, which is to harness the comparative strengths of the United Nations and the African Union for optimal outcomes in the service of humankind.

Allow me at this juncture to turn to the question of the reform of the Security Council. We have no doubt that the personal commitment of the President of the General Assembly to the Security Council reform process will advance our course. My delegation welcomes the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as the facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations. We assure him of our full support and cooperation.

We cannot remain complacent about the reform of the Council. It is not an easy task. The plethora of proposals and positions put forward thus far, some of which are seemingly irreconcilable, speaks to the complexity of the reform process. Twenty years of deliberations have not produced any broadly supported comprehensive solution. The main issue for us today is how we give impetus to the reform process.

It is the view of my delegation that we must remain focused on our shared objectives. Reforming the Security Council is not merely about increasing the stature and influence of new members within the United Nations system. Rather, it is meant to ensure that we have a Council that is not only reflective of the modern-day geopolitical realities but also transparent and democratic. It is time to correct the historical injustice done to Africa by creating new permanent seats for the continent and by increasing its seats in the non-permanent category in line with the Ezulwini Consensus.

Attempts to further slow down the process must be resisted. At the same time, we must be careful not to put the viability of negotiations at risk by pushing for immediate results through the submission of draft resolutions that propose a piecemeal reform of the Council. We advocate a comprehensive reform process in line with decision 62/557. Our discussions going forward should be guided by a desire to accommodate each other as we seek a model for an all-inclusive and effective Council that commands legitimacy.

We note the importance of having a text to guide the intergovernmental negotiations process. Without a real basis for negotiations, real progress will continue to elude us. We furthermore note the creation of an advisory group to the President that will, inter alia, produce a basis for the start of the intergovernmental negotiations. We can only hope that the roles of the facilitator and that of the advisory group will be kept distinct in order not to complicate the process further. Moreover, we expect that the basis of the negotiations that will take place will be carefully crafted. It should not undermine or compromise the integrity of Member States' positions. Above all, the process should remain Member State-driven.

I wish to conclude by pointing out that the reform of the Council is an imperative that we must achieve. Our commitment to reform the Council must be proved by our words and deeds. The time to bridge the gulf between rhetoric and action is now. With the necessary political will, we shall triumph.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the President for convening this important meeting. I wish to confine my statement to agenda item 123, which concerns an issue that is not only important to my delegation but that is very dear to the entire international community. In order to save time, I shall read out the main elements of my statement. The full text will be circulated.

I would like to align my statement with the statement made by the representative of Egypt (see A/68/PV.46) on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

My delegation also congratulates Ambassador Zahir Tanin on his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Malaysia believes that the Security Council needs comprehensive reform. With regard to its membership, we support an expansion in both categories, namely, those of the permanent and non-permanent members. That would not only reflect the current United Nations membership of 193 Member States, but also the organ's ability today to represent the interests of all Member States in the maintenance of world peace and security. At the same time, we recognize the need for Africa to be more represented**.** The region features predominantly on the agenda of the Council. Hence, Africa is entitled to have its voice in the Council consistently and continuously heard.

Let me state the obvious: we are getting nowhere. As reflected in the numerous statements by the majority of Member States throughout the years, it is abundantly clear that there is a need to reform the Council. We have called for greater efficiency and transparency in its working methods. We have insisted that the membership of the Security Council be expanded to reflect the realities of today's world. We have adamantly called for better geographical representation. We agree that there is a need to move forward. However, as soon as one attempts to take a step, objections are quickly and vociferously expressed. We are therefore left in a conundrum of urging all to move forward, yet frowning upon those who actually attempt to do so.

Tracing its roots back to resolution 47/62, this issue has for far too long been on the agenda of the General

Assembly without any sign of real progress. We feel that, in order for progress to be made, Member States must be willing to compromise and show considerable flexibility. Only then can we stand any chance of inching forward.

My delegation is certain that there are goals that we are all in favour of. Rather than on concentrating on the divergence of views that separate us, why not focus on the similarities that would enable us to achieve tangible results? Last year, we could also taste some progress being made with the initiative of the group of five small nations (S-5). Unfortunately, its draft resolution (A/66/L.42/Rev.2) was withdrawn at the eleventh hour (see A/66/PV.108), leading us to where we are now. Maybe we should revisit some of the proposals under the S-5 initiative.

In that regard, Malaysia believes that progress on improving the Council's working methods is possible in a relatively shorter time frame. The notes by the President of the Security Council contained in documents S/2010/507 and S/2013/515 are essential references that could pave a practical way forward to address the shortcomings in the working methods of the Council. More recently, the Council convened an open debate on that topic (see S/PV.7052), with many useful inputs and views from Member States on ways to enhance its transparency, efficiency and interaction with non-Council members. The debate reflected the continued interest of the wider United Nations membership towards the Council's working methods.

We welcome the increase in the number of public meetings and appreciate the Council's readiness to take on board the views and contributions of non-members, as well as regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, Malaysia hopes to see the Council continue with the well-established practice of convening open debates. We commend the Council for maintaining regular communication and consultations with the Peacebuilding Commission, country-specific configurations and troop-contributing countries. We also welcome the wrap-up meetings at the end of presidencies and the holding of Arria Formula meetings, which are some of the methods being used to enhance closer interaction with non-Council members.

While we aspire to become a non-permanent Council member in 2015, Malaysia cannot help but be worried in cases where the permanent members convene discussions first, before decisions are conveyed and drafts shared with the rest of the members of the Council very close to adoption**.** Similarly, we are also concerned at the selection process of chairs of subsidiary bodies of the Council. Malaysia is of the view that all Council members are eligible and qualified to fulfil those functions, and that non-permanent members should therefore be increasingly appointed to some of the key posts.

Another area of concern is the continuous encroachment of the Security Council upon matters that clearly fall under the prerogative of the General Assembly. All principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the two leading organs — the General Assembly and the Security Council — must faithfully respect each other's mandates in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Taking the entrenched position that Security Council reform should take the form of a composite package runs the risk of stallling reform for many years to come. Perhaps it is time that we address the issue of working methods and, for the time being, keep it separate from the debate on the reform of the Council's membership. We should do so by focusing on certain aspects, or what my delegation describes as low-lying fruits, which does not require amending the Charter of the United Nations. That could be done without prejudging the final outcome of the overall reform package.

We could start by looking into some of the topics currently being worked on by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. That does not necessarily mean that we should look at all the topics in parallel — maybe less contentious ones at the outset. In short, whatever we can agree to and adopt would be a good enough starting point when compared to achieving absolutely nothing. That is exactly what we have managed all these years. We believe that any breakthrough, although small in the eyes of the rest of the world, would finally put us on the path towards Security Council reform.

Ambassador Tanin made both of those proposals on how to move forward in a letter on 27 July 2012. As my delegation has mentioned before, the letter captured well the current state of play vis-à-vis Security Council reform. As we approach 2015, 10 years after the 2005 World Summit, in which our leaders committed themselves to an early reform of the Council, we cannot continue in the manner of the past nine rounds

of intergovernmental negotiations. We cannot simply engage in mere statement-reading sessions and hope that we might make progress. It seems obvious that the reason that there is a lack of momentum is because States do not have a negotiating text before them. My delegation would disagree that a proposal last year for a working document as a basis for negotiations did not enjoy the support of the wider membership. On the contrary, it was clear that many delegations were in favour of moving forward in that manner. A Member State-driven process, with the Chair drafting a working document, would make the text legitimate. Only then would we be able to conduct actual negotiations and identify areas where differences could be bridged.

Malaysia takes note of the President's decision to establish an advisory group made up of six permanent members to assist him in producing a basis for the start of intergovernmental negotiations that reflect the ideas put forward by Member States thus far. We appreciate the clarification that the group is advisory in nature and does not have a negotiating role. We understand that some members have concerns about the nature of the group and its relations with the intergovernmental negotiation process. In that connection, Malaysia is of the view that the advisory group should in no way undermine the intergovernmental negotiations or the framework provided by decision 62/557.

In conclusion, we need to make real progress and move away from entrenched national and group positions. In the coming months, progress will be measured not only by the sheer determination of those who wish to see the process move forward, but by the flexibility of delegations to see opportunities rather than obstacles towards the path on which we have embarked. I wish to assure the President of my delegation's support and cooperation to work with him and other members in that regard.

Mr. Lazarev (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): In school classrooms around the world, everyone knows that the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. It is indisputable that this Charter body, established almost 70 years ago, has throughout its history adopted a large number of decisions that have led to the achievement of invaluable results — saving human lives, preventing and ending international conflicts and restoring peace and stability in different regions and countries. The modern world needs an effective Security Council that is capable of having an effective mechanism that responds swiftly to crisis situations.

It would be hard to find representatives in the Hall today who did not understand the importance of carrying out Security Council reform. However, our views diverge, perhaps about how, when and by what means those changes can be made. Unfortunately, in recent years, the General Assembly has been unable to move closer towards an answer to those questions. Moreover, the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Council have been going on for more than a decade now, and it would be hard to find a delegation that is satisfied by the pace and outcome of the process.

To achieve the goals that have been set out, we need to show political will and flexibility. At the same time, any hasty actions that are not based on incorporating the interests of all groups of States could easily undermine the process and have a negative impact on its further progress. We advocate for a Security Council reform that would lead to a more balanced and fair diplomatic landscape.

We support expanding the Council's membership by providing all regional groups with additional seats on the Council. We draw attention to the underrepresentation of the Eastern European Group among non-permanent member States of the Council. We reiterate the position of Belarus that our Group of countries should be given an additional non-permanent seat on the Council.

It is important to continue efforts to increase transparency in the work of the Council. Transparency leads to a greater degree of confidence and respect for the Council's work. We draw attention to the increased number of open meetings in the Council, which undoubtedly gives all Member States an opportunity to contribute to the Council's work.

We also think it is right to think about how the report of the Security Council can better reflect the views expressed by non-Council member States during its open debates.

In our view, we need to review the entire process of preparing for the Council's reform and to begin that today, without waiting for results. It is time to move forward from words to deeds. We need to take the first real step towards that by determining the foundations on which successful negotiations will be based.

The delegation of Belarus supports the reappointment of the Permanent Representative of

Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations and stands ready to continue to participate constructively in the negotiating process, with a view to achieving the broadest possible agreement on the issue among Member States.

Ms. Čolaković (Bosnia and Herzegovina): First, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the convening of this debate on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, which is one of the most longstanding core topics of the Organization.

I would also like to thank Ambassador Liu Jieyi of China for introducing (see A/68/PV.46) the report of the Security Council (A/68/2) on its activities from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013.

We would like to reiterate our position with regard to the enlargement of the Council, which means that a more equitable geographic representation would have to be observed. It is obvious that the global geopolitical situation has been reconfigured significantly since the time the current composition of the Council was established. That geopolitical change has also impacted my regional group — the Group of Eastern European States, which consists of 23 Member States with a specific, complex and diverse composition. Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina firmly believes that our Group needs one more elected seat on the Security Council in order to respond adequately to the geographic and political demands of its members.

Bosnia and Herzegovina had the honour of serving a two-year term as an elected member of the Security Council in 2010 and 2011. Our experience proves that a growing number of countries are willing and able to contribute to dealing with issues regarding the maintenance of international peace and security. Bosnia and Herzegovina is ready to work with other Member States on the issue of enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the Security Council's work. We believe the time has come to cease the endless debates, which do not always contribute to a rapprochement in the positions pertaining to Council reform.

We would like to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin on his reappointment as the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, and look forward to an energetic and constructive new round of negotiations.

We welcome the President's decision to establish the advisory group of ambassadors, announced in his letter of 22 October, which will provide inputs and advise him on this important process. However, we want to underline that the advisory group lacks a regional balance. Although we are sure that its members' contribution and the President's leadership will remove any bottlenecks, at the same time we believe that the group should by no means substitute for the intergovernmental negotiations.

It would be a crucial development if we could step forward from today's meeting with a common denominator of strong support for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, on which we could continue to build the principles that could adequately meet the aspirations of all States Members of the United Nations. Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to continue its engagement, together with all Member States, to make progress in the negotiations process for a more equal, efficient, transparent and epresentative Security Council. This is a membership-driven process. We call on all Member States to exercise goodwill and a spirit of compromise.

Mr. Lippwe (Federated States of Micronesia): The Federated States of Micronesia welcomes this opportunity to participate in the debate on the agenda item "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". This is not the first time that Micronesia has pronounced itself on that very important issue, therefore our position is well known.

Let me, at the outset, place on record my delegation's gratitude for the President's stewardship and commitment to the very difficult task of reforming the Security Council. In that context, we welcome the establishment of an advisory group initiated by his Office, and we embrace his decision to reappoint Ambassador Tanin to allow him to continue his work as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

The delegation of Micronesia also aligns itself with the statement made at the 46th meeting by the representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis on behalf of the L.69 Group, as well as with the statement to be made by the representative of Papua New Guinea on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States.

At the World Summit in 2005, our Heads of State and Government agreed to an early reform of the Security Council. Almost 10 years later, it is regrettable that very little has been done in terms of reform. My delegation is very much aware that fatigue and frustration may set in, as few visible or tangible

results are in evidence after so many years of ongoing discussions within the Organization to reform the Security Council. But we cannot let that derail our efforts. We must stay the course and remain committed. Fortune favours persistence. Even the hardest rock will be melted by persistent droplets of water.

My delegation therefore strongly believes in and supports the specific suggestions that the President has put forward, which will jump-start the intergovernmental negotiations in earnest. It is high time that the intergovernmental negotiations process move forward on the basis of a text-based negotiation. We welcome his initiative whereby the advisory group will provide inputs reflecting the ideas put forward in the negotiations, and on whose basis the intergovernmental negotiations can commence. Given the overwhelming support by Member States for an early reform and expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, the proposal should be included in the draft text as a key parameter in the negotiation process.

Global realities make it imperative that we reform the Security Council. Nearly a decade after the 2005 World Summit, when the Assembly was mandated to deliver on Council reform, that goal has been elusive. The proposal presented to us by the President provides a unique opportunity to refocus our attention and to encourage an even stronger commitment by Member States. With the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and the tenth anniversary of the World Summit looming in 2015, it is time to bring these intergovernmental negotiations to a decisive and successful conclusion.

In conclusion, it goes without saying that membership in a reformed Security Council, particularly in the permanent category, must include Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. The African continent must also be represented.

Mr. De Vega (Philippines): First of all, we wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador John Ashe for convening this meeting and for his statement this morning (see A/68/PV.46). We also join other delegations in thanking Ambassador Liu Jieyi of China for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/68/2) and the delegation of the United States for preparing its introduction. We also congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan for his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

At the outset, the Philippines aligns itself with the statement made this morning by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The reform of the Security Council is an important issue for all of us and a matter of vital concern and relevance for our Organization. On that point, the Philippines welcomes this timely debate on agenda item 123, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters." Indeed, it is in our shared interests to ensure that the Security Council is able to respond to and anticipate not only traditional issues concerning international peace and security, but also emerging new ones affecting our common security.

The reform of the Security Council continues to be a work in progress. Over the decades, we have seen several proposals that deserve careful consideration. Various permutations on broader representation and increased membership in the Security Council have been offered in this debate. Different initiatives have been proposed to move the process along. Yet, to date no significant inroads have been made.

Symptomatic of the sentiments on the issue is the sovereign decision of a Member State to decline its seat on the Security Council for the period 2014-2015. The Philippines recognizes that as a principled position taken by that country's Government. We, for one, share with it the disappointment over the failure to establish a Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction. We therefore clearly need to make advancements on the issue of reform within the Security Council. The unprecedented action taken by that Member State is in fact a clear sign that reforms must be undertaken.

The Philippines notes that the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council have provided a venue for all of us to discuss the proposals at hand and an opportunity to have a better appreciation of the proposals of the respective groups. We now have to work on generating creative ideas that will bring divergent streams of thoughts and interests together. For our part, we would like to highlight the following fundamental principles that continue to garner support.

First, efforts to reform the Security Council should aim at making it more representative, accountable, democratic, transparent, efficient, effective and fair and even-handed.

Secondly, the reform exercise should be realistic and the objectives achievable.

Thirdly, the reform process must have the broadest possible support, bearing in mind that Article 108 of the Charter of the United Nations effectively gives the five permanent members a veto, as they have to ratify amendments to the Charter for any changes to be effected.

Lastly, the removal of the right to the veto of the permanent category and permanent members is a non-starter.

In that regard, on the basis of those principles, the Philippines wishes to highlight the following five points.

First, with regard to the categories of membership, the enlargement in both categories of membership on the basis of equitable geographic distribution should reflect present geopolitical realities. There should be a serious consideration of proposals for intermediate category seats without prejudice to equitable geographic distribution. Supporting the intermediate category seats cannot be construed as abandoning the de facto position, since that is just an intermediary arrangement that will be reviewed at a predetermined time. The possibility of creating permanent seats still remains.

Secondly, on the question of the veto, there should be a restriction on the use of the veto, including the establishment of procedures for the overriding of a veto. In the case of new members, the granting of veto rights should be accompanied by a commitment not to use it until a future review conference. The future review conference could explore modalities to counterbalance the veto. Furthermore, the use of the veto should not be linked to working methods.

Thirdly, on regional representation, more equitable geographic distribution is defined in Article 23, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations. That regional representation is not equivalent to the granting of a regional seat leading to regional accountability.

Fourthly, regarding the size of an enlarged Security Council, a limited enlargement must be based on criteria that balance equitable geographic distribution with efficiency and effectiveness. The ideal size would be a minimum of 21 members and a maximum of 31. The total number must be an odd number to facilitate decision-making in the event of a tied vote. The question of size could be revisited at a future review conference.

Fifthly, the reform of the working methods should be part of any reform package. Enlargement and working methods should be seen as inseparable. The reform of working methods should proceed if there is no agreement on other issues, since that does not require an amendment to the Charter. Specific areas for change include the adoption and circulation of formal rules of procedure, procedures to guarantee transparency in decision-making, accountability in performance and access to information, consultation, cooperation and an adequate exchange of information with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as access and increased participation by non-members of the Security Council in its work and activities.

The Philippines acknowledges that the President of the General Assembly has initiated the establishment of an advisory group, which he has tasked with the drafting of a negotiation text that adequately reflects all current positions on Council reform. The initiative is certainly noteworthy. We recognize and appreciate the intent of the President to move the process forward.

However, we have also taken note of the concerns expressed by delegations that the group cannot and should not bypass the intergovernmental negotiations process. The Philippines emphasizes, therefore, that while it remains cognizant of the need for serious effort and the political will for real change, reform should be within the framework of the current intergovernmental negotiations process.

Finally, for our part, the Philippines is committed to working closely with other delegations not only to discuss but also to effect meaningful and positive changes in the Security Council. The Philippines stands ready to work in a positive and constructive manner with other delegations in order to make meaningful progress on this issue of vital concern to us all.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): I would like to join my colleagues in thanking the President for convening this meeting. Let me also thank the President for his letter dated 22 October. Turkey will continue to constructively contribute to the discussions on the reform of the Security Council, which is of particular importance to each and every Member of the United Nations.

I also wish to express our appreciation to the Chinese presidency of the Security Council for introducing (see A/68/PV.46) the annual report of the Council (A/68/2) to the General Assembly, and to the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations for its valuable efforts in preparing the report.

I also congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, on his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We firmly believe that Ambassador Tanin, as Chair of those negotiations, will continue to play a significant role in the advancement of the process, with particular attention to transparency and the Member State-driven nature of the negotiations.

The report before us today provides a factual and accurate account of the work of the Security Council. It demonstrates the diversity of the issues on its agenda and the Council's heavy and increasing workload. We support delegations that spoke previously in asking for a less descriptive and more analytical report, while, at the same time, bearing in mind the difficulties in terms of the implementation of such an analytical approach. On that note, I would like reiterate our firm belief that the working methods of the Security Council should and can be further improved in order to enhance its transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.

The reform of the Security Council continues to be the common wish of all Members of the United Nations. Despite our differing views, we all wish to see the Council more adapted to the realities of the ever-changing world, more democratic and more representative. A comprehensive reform is a necessity, as developments all over the world require the Security Council to act swiftly and responsibly in order to meet its obligations. It is our common responsibility to preserve the credibility of our Organization and we, the Member States, should spare no effort to that end. In that sense, Turkey shares the vision of the President expressed in his acceptance speech (see A/67/PV.87) and letter that reform is an important element of the efforts to strengthen the Organization which, if they fail, might cause it to risk becoming inconsequential.

On the other hand, we strongly believe that the intergovernmental negotiations process is the sole platform for a possible comprehensive reform. Even though we are united in our goal, which is an early reform of the Council, the membership remains divided on the ways to reach that goal and on the ultimate outcome. That is why we should be very careful and refrain from steps that might further widen the existing gaps. In that sense, we take note of the recently appointed advisory group, which is advisory in nature and does not have a negotiating and drafting role, as the President of the General Assembly defined in his letter and reaffirmed in his meeting with the representatives of the Uniting for Consensus Group yesterday. I would like to emphasize that such a group should not overstep, bypass or replace the intergovernmental negotiations by embarking upon a drafting exercise. On that note, allow me to conclude by touching on Turkey's position on Security Council reform.

First, in terms of the categories of membership in the Council, Turkey continues to support the compromise proposal outlined in the Italy-Colombia paper, which foresees the establishment of a new, longer-term membership category or the possibility of a member being re-elected to up to three consecutive terms, coupled with an increase in the number of regular non-permanent seats. We believe that additional permanent seats would not be in keeping with the idea of an accountable and transparent Council. Moreover, the Uniting for Consensus position, through its proposal to allocate a non-permanent seat for small and medium-sized States, most of which have never been elected to the Council, provides the most democratic option for a sustainable outcome. If the reformed Security Council is to be the Council not only of today but also of the future, it is imperative that we all concentrate our best efforts on proposals that will provide the Council with the necessary flexibility in terms of its composition.

Secondly, a comprehensive reform should cover all five areas set forth in decision 62/557. Any proposal that falls short of encompassing those areas would, without a doubt, be incomplete.

Finally, we reiterate our support for a correction of the historic injustice done to Africa by substantially improving the representation of the continent on the Council.

Turkey, as a member of the Uniting for Consensus Group, is ready to continue to engage actively and constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations. We kindly request that all Member States show the required flexibility in order to reach an outcome that garners the broadest possible acceptance.

Mr. Lasso Mendoza (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation endorses the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/68/PV.46).

I would also like to express my delegation's appreciation for the new momentum that the President, Ambassador John Ashe, is giving to the process of intergovernmental negotiations in relation to the matter of the equitable representation in the Security Council.

It is recognized by the majority that the current structure of the Security Council is, we could say, like a daguerreotype — and therefore a static expression of international relations as they were more than 60 years ago, which in large measure is not very relevant to contemporary realities. For that reason, we believe that the final result of our deliberations and negotiations on the matter must avoid creating a new photograph that will become irrelevant in a few years.

For Ecuador, the democratic deficit of the organs that make up the current international system, particularly the Security Council, must be corrected in an urgent manner if the Organization is to be able to respond to the purposes and principles that led to its founding. My delegation is therefore ready to begin text-based intergovernmental negotiations, so that we can start outlining clearly the United Nations that we want, in the framework of a complete reform of the Organization.

The number of Members of the United Nations has significantly increased since its founding and since the last increase in the membership of the Security Council, in 1965. That reality should be reflected in the membership of the Council, which is why my country supports the creation of new seats in the permanent and non-permanent categories. However, regardless of the final form that the increase may take, it is indispensable that the mechanisms by which the members of the Council consult with and are accountable to the States of the region that they represent be institutionalized, inasmuch as, it must be remembered, the Security Council acts, in the fulfilment of its responsibilities, on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations.

Such an increase in the number of members of the Security Council cannot simply be a mathematical answer to the increase in the membership of the Organization as a whole. A reform in that direction would be useless if it were not accompanied by an in-depth revision of the working methods of the Security Council, including, among other items, the question of the veto, transparency in its deliberations and rebalancing the relationship between the General Assembly, the organ whose composition reflects global sovereignty, and the Security Council.

If the reform that is achieved at the end of our negotiations is not comprehensive, it will be of little or of no use. In the meantime, we welcome the initiatives promoted by some members of the Security Council that have looked for an improvement in its mechanisms relating to transparency and accountability. However, we must reiterate our concern over the increasingly apparent tendency of the Council to include in its agenda items that go beyond the mandate granted by the Charter and that properly belong to the General Assembly or to other organs of the United Nations.

Mr. Ruíz (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by saying that Colombia fully associates itself with the statement made this morning by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/68/PV.46).

I would like to thank the President for convening this new debate on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Likewise, I thank the Permanent Representative of China for introducing the report of the Security Council for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013 (A/68/2). I also wish to express appreciation for the President's interest in moving forward on the path towards Security Council reform, a process that has been full of obstacles due to its complexity. It is precisely because of its obvious complexity that Colombia wishes to make an appeal to have a process that is carried out with transparency, integrity and open communication, regardless of which mechanisms are chosen for working on various scenarios in pursuit of that goal.

Although Colombia recognizes that the President has the authority to explore various alternatives in driving the discussions and decisions to be taken to resolve the complex issues under his responsibility, it is clear that his power should be exercised within the framework of the established rules and mandates. The mandate established for the negotiations on Security Council reform is contained in decision 62/557. Therefore, my delegation believes that the advisory group recently set up by the President should limit itself to providing the advisory opinions that the President requires, without its functioning implying under any circumstances that the group has the mandate to prepare documents, draft resolutions or proposals with the purpose of their discussion within the intergovernmental negotiations group.

In that regard, I am grateful for Ambassador Ashe's statement at yesterday's meeting with all the members of the Uniting for Consensus Group, especially his reference to the purely consultative nature of the advisory group and the fact that it does not represent any of the parties to the negotiations and that it has

no negotiating function, no mandate to draft, shorten or summarize any negotiating document, and that its activities will not affect the intergovernmental negotiation group.

We are firm believers, as is the President, in the importance of galvanizing the intergovernmental negotiation process so we can all rely on a Security Council that is adequate to the current international scene, with its multiplicity of actors, challenges, threats and realities, which are different from what they were when the Council was first established. We believe that the main objective of the intergovernmental negotiation process is to promote dialogue and to help to close the gap so we can all reach the desired consensus.

International dynamics require that we build a more inclusive and accountable international society. Our vision for the Security Council reform reflects that requirement. We wish to see a Security Council that represents regional dynamics, whose composition is flexible in the face of global change and the realities of power at different times in history. We wish to see a Council that does not increase or perpetuate privilege and that addresses the underrepresentation of Africa, a continent with a particular perspective on the challenges to international peace and security, as well as the underrepresentation of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate for today's meeting.

I shall now give the floor speakers in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind delegations that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Kim Un Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to exercise the right of reply to respond to the remarks made by the representative of South Korea about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which are totally absurd, groundless and unreasonable, as well as provocative. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea totally rejects the South Korean delegation's remarks and strongly condemns its provocative accusations. I believe that the South Korean delegation does not represent its country's own interests in the United Nations. On the contrary, it represents the interests and positions of the United States, because South Korea has no right to speak for itself and on its own without the consent of the United States, which is South Korea's master.

As for the so-called resolutions adopted by the Security Council against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, they are products of double standards, high-handedness and anachronistic thinking on the part of the United States. Their adoption has highlighted the double standards, high-handedness and arbitrariness of Security Council actions, particularly on the Korean peninsula issue, and has only aggravated the tension on the Korean peninsula and made the issue more complex.

It was the nuclear threat made by the United States that compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to go nuclear. It is the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that has been the cause of the Korean peninsula's nuclear issue. It is the fact of the United States Army being stationed in South Korea under the cover of the so-called United Nations command that has disrupted peace and security on the Korean peninsula, and South Korea has contributed to the confrontation and tensions there by serving its master's interests.

The representative of South Korea should learn what is preventing the Security Council from performing its duties and responsibilities for preserving international peace and security before blindly following the United States and recklessly slandering South Korea's brothers.

Mr. Lim Sang Beom (Republic of Korea): I would like to reply to the intervention of the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is once again blaming others for its illicit activities and provocations. Needless to say, the tension in the region is caused by North Korea's continued missile launches and nuclear tests. The alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States is defensive in nature and for the past several decades has made an effective contribution to deterring war on the Korean peninsula.

In that regard, North Korea's argument is nothing more than an irresponsible pretext. In the past, it has claimed that its activities were for peaceful purposes and that it had no intention of developing nuclear weapons. But now the international community has witnessed three nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. North Korea is the only country that has conducted nuclear tests in the

twenty-first century, in violation of international law. Similarly, North Korea argues that its launches using ballistic-missile technology are for peaceful uses in outer space. However, given North Korea's track record of repeatedly breaking its promises and agreements, it is clear that that is not the case.

I would like to point out that North Korea incorrectly invokes the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. That right is reserved only for those countries that faithfully implement their obligations under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards within the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). North Korea, which announced its withdrawal from adherence to the NPT and conducted nuclear tests in violation of Security Council resolutions, is not entitled to such a right. In that regard, I would like to reiterate that under the relevant Security Council resolutions and the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, North Korea has the obligation to return to the NPT and the IAEA safeguards and to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and responsible manner.

Mr. Kim Jin Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Every day the South Korean regime, as a puppet of its American master and together with external forces, takes another step along the road of national betrayal and pushes the situation on the Korean peninsula to extremes, introducing highly sophisticated means of war, including nuclear weapons.

For Koreans, the United States is the arch-criminal and principal actor that has prolonged our people's pain and calamity, blocking the path to the reunification of our nation.

The United States is also responsible for threatening the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with all necessary means, including nuclear weapons, and the dominant Power that governs acts in South Korea. Even using the right terms, I regret to say that South Korea is nothing but a servant and a blind follower of its American master, who is consumed by an absurd dream of reunification while, on the other hand, is trying to act by misinterpreting statements between the North and the South made sincerely through dialogue.

In South Korea, no political figure has the courage to speak on any topic without first reading the face of his American master. So long as South Korean authorities do not renounce their traitorous policy of depending on foreign forces in confronting their compatriots, inter-Korean relations will not achieve reconciliation — much less the desire for the reunification of their mother country.

In conclusion, it would be most absurd for the South Koreans, without taking into account their spirit of national independence, to lean on foreign Powers to resolve the issue of inter-Korean relations.

With regard to the protest that the South Korean representative will surely make about my comments, I state beforehand that it will be rejected again, since this is my last statement.

Mr. Lim Sang Beom (Republic of Korea): I am sorry to take the floor again. I think that many delegations clearly remember that bizarre and disturbing propaganda video on the YouTube website in March depicting New York in flames. Furthermore, it was North Korea that cut off a key military hotline with the Republic of Korea and declared that it had entered a state of war. Through its State media in April, North Korea threatened all foreign companies and tourists in the Republic of Korea and called on them to evacuate, stating that it was on the verge of a nuclear war. From those facts alone, it is clear who is truly responsible for the situation on the Korean peninsula.

From the statement by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we can say again that North Korea has repeatedly rejected Security Council resolutions and that it is not bound by any obligations. I reiterate that Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations clearly states that all Member States should accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. Let me also stress that all the relevant Security Council resolutions regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have been adopted unanimously every time by the sitting Security Council. Blaming the Council denies not only its authenticity and credibility, but also the collective wisdom of its members both past and present.

Furthermore, let me add that not only the Security Council but more than 80 States Members of the United Nations have issued national statements condemning North Korea's third nuclear test and urging North Korea to abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions. I would like to ask the representative of North Korea to name at least one country that defends North Korea's actions.

North Korea receives millions of dollars in assistance annually from the United Nations as well as the international community. It is a great pity that North Korean authorities abandon their basic duty to their people by squandering scarce resources on nuclear and missile development. North Korea should use its limited resources to improve the lives of its people, rather than waste them on the development of such illicit activities.

Lastly, what is good for the Korean people? The answer is very simple and clear: North Korea should give up its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic-missile programmes and return to the international community as a responsible member. The Republic of Korea is always ready to help the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, if it takes the right path.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.