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New York

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

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

Agenda items 9 and 119 (*continued*)

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

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

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): The convening of a joint debate on Security Council reform and the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/64/2) is a wise initiative because, in the light of the report, concrete aspects of the Council's reform stand out with greater clarity and the everlasting discussion on the number and quality of its members is set aside, at least momentarily.

Consistent with its desire for an international order in which institutional development and the rule of law prevail, Costa Rica historically has had particular interest in the Security Council's working methods. In keeping with this interest, we are part of the group of five small nations (S-5), which acts to promote changes in the Council's working methods.

As a member of the Security Council since 2008, Costa Rica has tried to meet the expectations of those who supported our candidacy. They, like us, were aware of the difficulties inherent in seeking to influence the Council's working methods and in working with nine other elected members and the powerful permanent members. However, we believe that our actions have contributed to promoting greater respect from the Council towards non-member States, increased transparency in its work, improved access to the Council for all and extended participation in decision-making.

The period under review was especially notable with regard to the consideration of the issue of working methods. Under the Belgian presidency in August 2008, the first open debate in 14 years on the question of working methods took place. In addition, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions agreed to engage in a fruitful debate with the S-5, at which the level of representation on the delegations and the participation of the members of the Council illustrated the willingness on the part of some to learn and improve, as well as the stubbornness and arrogance of others. We hope that we have successfully carried out the mandate given to us by the General Assembly a little more than two years ago.

We are now considering the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We reaffirm the shared perception that, in and of itself, the report does not serve the purpose of broadly and comprehensively informing us either about the actions of the Council or of the reasons for which it did not act on certain occasions when it should have. Once again, it is worth recalling here that, in Article 24, the authors of the Charter stipulated that the Council would inform the Assembly by means of its annual report as well as through special reports. The latter is a tool that the Council has used only to recommend the admission of new Members to the Organization. Pure and simple,

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that fact reflects the reluctance of the Council, and in particular of its permanent members, to inform the General Assembly of its actions.

Given that regrettable fact, we wish to acknowledge the additional efforts made this year by the delegation of Uganda in the preparation of the report before us. That work included the convening, in late October, of an innovative informal meeting with members of the General Assembly. That is no doubt a laudable practice that must be repeated in the future in order to take advantage of the designated period between July and October for the preparation of the report as a way to increase awareness, understanding and the legitimacy of the Council's work through more intense interaction.

Although Costa Rica understands the difficulties involved in persuading actors with opposing interests to agree to a more analytical text, we are all aware that the quality of the annual report has gradually improved. However, we would urge the Council to make greater efforts to better inform the members of the Assembly of what it is doing on their behalf. We all know that is possible.

Allow me to make a few brief comments with regard to some issues that we believe to be insufficiently reflected in the report. First of all, it has not been easy to ensure greater respect for countries that contribute military and police contingents to peacekeeping operations. Countries which contribute in that way to the work of the Organization know that, until recently, they were invited to formal meetings only once the terms had been agreed for the renewal of peacekeeping mandates. Thanks to the efforts of a group of countries that includes Costa Rica, today the consultation process begins earlier and benefits from increased interaction with the Secretariat.

That is just part of the progress made in connection with peace missions. The Council has considered that issue on an ongoing basis, and all Members of the Organization have been invited to attend. The Secretariat has provided a concrete basis for discussion. The Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs have made considerable efforts. Non-governmental organizations have contributed to those efforts. Their invaluable support, and especially that of the International Peace Institute and Security Council Report, must not be ignored.

As a result of that exercise, drafting and renewing mandates will be better linked with the planning and deployment of the missions. Peace consolidation efforts will begin earlier and be better linked to the peacekeeping phase. We hope that we can thereby reduce the rate at which conflicts recurred in the past.

This assessment would be incomplete if I were to fail to refer to the revitalization of the comprehensive framework for the protection of civilians, especially women and children, or to stress that protection is a cross-cutting priority of peace missions. That progress is satisfactory, but still insufficient. In our view, the difficult conciliation of different positions should be reflected in the report. As it is, it has been made to disappear. The members of the Assembly must guess at what those differences are by referring to the list of those that have sponsored the most important resolutions of the Council in this area.

I would like to end my remarks on the substance of the report by referring to the progress that was made with regard to working methods during the informal meetings that took place between Council members and the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka. Despite the fact that my delegation regrets the inability of the Council to take action in connection with that case, we would nevertheless highlight the readiness of its members to engage in an informal, direct and ongoing dialogue with the representative of a country in connection with a situation that was a source of anguish for a large part of the international community for several weeks. As with any other, that important innovation will be worthwhile only to the degree that it is repeated in the future and integrated fully into the Council's practices.

I cannot conclude my intervention without saying a few words about Security Council reform. First of all, however, I would like to acknowledge your interest and willingness, Mr. President, to seek progress on that important issue. The members of the Assembly are grateful for that commitment.

I have already explained the importance that my delegation attaches to the issue of working methods. Our positions on the non-extension of the so-called veto and the limitations that should be placed on its use are well known. Equally known is the fact that my country believes that no new permanent members should be admitted to the Council. An increase in that category would diminish even further the influence of

the Council's elected members, be detrimental to Member States that will never be permanent members, and reduce access to decision-making processes by virtue of the so-called cascade effect, as demonstrated by Costa Rica some time ago.

We remain cautious with regard to the issue of increasing the number of Council members. Our experience with efforts in that regard has confirmed that the current number of members already makes it difficult to achieve the necessary consensus. However, we recognize the need for more equitable geographical representation.

Costa Rica wants Council reform. We have shown flexibility by agreeing to discuss the so-called intermediate formula, which would establish a new category of elected members that would serve for longer terms, albeit not to exceed three years, and be eligible for one-time re-election. We believe that that is the only proposal for expansion that can realistically be expected to generate a broad and viable consensus, including, of course, the necessary consent of the permanent members. We urge the small group of countries who aspire to become permanent members to take an equally flexible stance and to make efforts to contribute to a decision-making process that will allow the Organization to better achieve its objectives of peace and security.

Mr. Al-Allaf (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Jordan would like to express its gratitude to the Security Council for its annual report (A/64/2) and to welcome its presentation to the General Assembly. We would like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the delegation of Uganda for their efforts in preparing this report and our gratitude to Viet Nam and Austria for contacting the membership of the Organization. We thank the members of the Security Council for the valuable informal discussions they held with the S-5 group — Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland — while the report was being drafted.

The report before us today is an important element in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is a necessary channel of communication between these two important bodies of the United Nations. Moreover, our discussions today in and of themselves represent a healthy forum in which to exchange views about the report, in order to accomplish the goals hoped for in its development.

First, I would like to note the significant improvements made in this report over the past few years, such as increasing the comprehensiveness of its introduction, and also the efforts of the Security Council President, who is charged with drafting the report and with contacting States that are not Council members and eliciting their opinions on the report's contents and form. We wish to thank the Council President for his briefings on the report before and after it was issued.

The basic function of this report is to draw a comprehensive and considered picture for presentation to the General Assembly on the Security Council's work and accomplishments in the field of international peace and security. Naturally, we always hope that the report will be analytical in nature and will be drafted in a coherent and comprehensive manner. However, we must be realistic as well, and we must understand the political and logistical difficulties that prevent the report from becoming an integrated political document that would include a strategic evaluation of the situation of international peace and security.

We do not expect the report to acquire such a form within the next few years, but we believe that there is more room for positive steps and reasonable improvements that can be made to enhance the report. The issues presented to the Security Council are important and are greatly relevant to the interests of the wider membership of the Organization.

For example, the report could benefit from dealing with how the Council handled several thematic issues, such as peacekeeping operations. It could discuss the lessons learned that would enable the Council to build on positive steps and elements that it has taken throughout the year and to develop those lessons. Moreover, the Council would be able to deal with the challenges and obstacles that might present themselves again. An accurate description and a realistic analysis are important for maintaining the institutional memory necessitated by the rotation of the non-permanent members of the Council.

The Security Council is charged with defending and maintaining international peace and security, which means that the issues on its agenda are closely tied — most often directly tied — to the interests of States not members of the Council. Therefore, a comprehensive and objective annual report on the activities of the Council requires effective and

organized communication with members of the General Assembly in its drafting, especially since most of the issues the Council examines — perhaps even all of them — give rise to legal, political and financial obligations.

The report also gives members of the Council the opportunity to monitor the improvements that have been introduced to the Council's working methods, especially those aspects that require further improvement. Those aspects should not necessarily be dealt with from the perspective of self-criticism, though we do not believe that there is anything wrong with that. They can be handled through an objective evaluation of an organ that seeks to enhance effectiveness and to develop methods that are in line with developments in the issues and topics that it examines.

Now more than ever before, our world requires efforts to guarantee a more effective role for the United Nations in dealing with changing international challenges, to democratize it through reform of the Security Council. Jordan regards Council reform as a vital issue and a high priority. In its national capacity and within the S-5 group, Jordan will continue to play a constructive role and offer realistic and implementable visions, especially with regard to reforming the Council's working methods. Ideas and visions on reform of the working methods must not be held hostage to progress that we seek in other aspects of Security Council reform, such as categories of membership, expansion or the use of the veto. In our opinion, the ideas and visions on reforming the working methods are potential areas of work in which we can achieve quick gains.

The S-5 group presented a paper earlier this year that incorporated several of those ideas, which we hope the whole membership will support so that we can bring about a concrete and genuine change to the Council's working methods.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Over the past year, the Security Council has deliberated on a host of issues touching on international peace and security. It has made tireless efforts to facilitate the settlement of regional hot-spot issues, promote regional stability and assist post-conflict countries in peacebuilding endeavours, and has achieved many good results. While fulfilling its obligations, the Security Council has also endeavoured to improve its working methods and increase the transparency of its operations. It has also enhanced exchanges with other relevant parties.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the sacred responsibility of maintaining international peace and security to the Security Council. Given the complicated international circumstances, various security challenges and the expectations of Member States, the Security Council is now shouldering a great responsibility.

Pursuant to the mandate bestowed on it by the Charter, the Security Council should devote more energy to addressing the major pressing issues that threaten international peace and security. It should refrain from discussing issues that in essence belong to the internal affairs of a country and pose no threat to international peace and security. The Council should also avoid deliberating issues that in essence do not fall within the scope of its responsibilities, so as not to affect the efforts of other United Nations organs and agencies to perform their normal functions.

The Security Council should also tap its full potential to strengthen its capacity for peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and thus make greater efforts towards the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Security Council should also strengthen its dialogue and cooperation with other United Nations organs and agencies, as well as with regional and subregional organizations. The Security Council should place greater emphasis on the role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, encourage and support their mediation and good offices endeavours, and establish effective information-sharing mechanisms with these organizations.

The Security Council should also vigorously promote the reform of United Nations peacekeeping operations, which are now facing new circumstances and challenges. As the decision-making body that authorizes the deployment of peacekeeping operations, the Security Council should improve its working methods and decision-making mechanism in order to help peacekeeping operations to carry out their missions more effectively.

China firmly supports the necessary and reasonable reform of the Security Council. One of the core objectives of Security Council reform is to increase the Council's representativeness so that its membership reflects the tremendous changes that have

taken place in the size and composition of United Nations membership. Reform should give top priority to increasing the representation of developing countries, in particular those of Africa. It must also reflect the trend of democratization in international relations and give medium-sized and small countries greater access to the decision-making process of the Security Council.

The five clusters of issues involving Security Council reform are interrelated and therefore should not be addressed with a step-by-step or piecemeal approach. Only an integrated approach or a package solution will accommodate the interests and concerns of Member States on different issues.

Security Council reform is a complex and sensitive issue, and a systematic project involving the interests of 192 Member States. The will to move ahead and a flexible and pragmatic approach that accommodates the interests of all parties and stresses democratic consultation are necessary to achieving the aims of Council reform. Only in this way can a solution be found that bridges the differences of all parties and serves the common and long-term interests of all Member States, and can the outcome of reform be sustainable, vigorous and dynamic.

The sixty-third session of the General Assembly launched the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. During the negotiations, parties candidly exchanged views on the five clusters of issues on Security Council reform. China appreciates the overall approach adopted by Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, and Ambassador Zahir Tanin, chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, in handling the issue of Security Council reform. We hope that the General Assembly at this session will continue to adhere to the principle of ensuring ownership by Member States and fully accommodate the concerns of all parties while striving for the widest possible consensus.

Mr. Soborun (Mauritius): I join colleagues in thanking you, Sir, for convening today's meeting on agenda item 9 on the annual report of the Security Council and agenda item 119 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

I also wish to express my appreciation to Ambassador Shekou Touray of Sierra Leone, in his capacity as coordinator of the committee of 10 of the African Group, and to Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting of Austria, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November, for the comprehensive and candid presentation of the annual report of the Security Council, contained in document A/64/2.

As far as the annual report is concerned, we share the view expressed by many delegations that it is once again a mere compilation of events in chronological order. We therefore reiterate our request that it be made more analytical with a view to enabling Member States to assess the strengths and failures of the Council in tackling the various conflict situations. We also share the growing concern of many delegations over the gradual encroachment by the Security Council on the powers and mandates that fall under the purview of the General Assembly. Furthermore, we believe that, with a view to further improving transparency and accountability in the working methods of the Council, it is more than high time to finalize the rules of procedure of the Council, which have remained provisional over the past six decades.

The reform of the Security Council, the most important organ of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, can never be overemphasized. It remains at the heart of the reform of the United Nations to make it more transparent, legitimate and accountable. The reformed Security Council of the twenty-first century should be able to meet the aspirations and legitimate rights of the different geographical regions of the world in an open, transparent and equitable manner. It should be able to respond expeditiously in an effective and efficient manner to the rapidly changing geopolitical realities of the world.

However, it is our considered view that there can be no meaningful reform of the Security Council without an expansion in the categories of both permanent and non-permanent membership. The permanency and the veto rights conferred upon the permanent members have placed them in a category of members that are more equal than the others in an Organization whose Charter is based on equal, sovereign rights.

This being the case — and there is every likelihood that it will continue to be so for decades to come — one way to remedy the situation would be to enhance the legitimacy, equitability and effectiveness of the Council by adding new permanent members. In any case, almost 64 years after the establishment of the United Nations, it is time that the powers of the current permanent five be shared with newcomers in the field that are ready to shoulder their fair share of responsibilities in accordance with the Charter and in the larger interests of the international community. The expansion of the Group of Eight into the Group of 20 is a vivid example of the efforts to coordinate global economic and financial governance at the summit level. The expansion of the Security Council cannot lag behind.

While improvements in the working methods of the Security Council are essential if it is to increase its transparency and accountability, the key to the comprehensive and meaningful reform of the Security Council remains in its expansion, particularly in the category of permanent membership. A decisive action on the expansion of membership in the permanent category will in turn unleash the dynamics to address issues of common concern, such as regional representation, equitable geographical distribution, the small and medium-sized States and the rotational seat devoted to the small island developing States, as suggested by the Caribbean Community, and the right of veto.

The historic decision 62/557 of the General Assembly, which, inter alia, called for the commencement of intergovernmental negotiations, broke the stalemate in the reform of the Security Council, which had been stuck in the Open-ended Working Group for over 14 years. In this context, I should like to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for expeditiously implementing decision 62/557 to start intergovernmental negotiations by appointing Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan to chair such negotiations in informal plenary of the General Assembly on his behalf.

However, we have to admit that the three rounds of negotiations held during the sixty-third session were more in the nature of debate and discussions, with Member States and groups of States restating their positions and proposals rather than engaging in real negotiations. Nonetheless, one of the positive results of the three rounds of negotiations has been the narrowing of the options that could garner the widest possible support. This view was implicitly reinforced by Ambassador Tanin himself who, in his letter of 16 July 2009, stated that the model that commanded the most support was an expansion in both categories.

We fully agree with this conclusion, as it really translates his oft-repeated commitment to remain impartial to any of the positions yet partial to progress. In this respect, we encourage Ambassador Zahir Tanin, who has been reappointed chair of the intergovernmental negotiations by the President of the General Assembly, to pursue his efforts in a positive direction and produce a text that would garner the widest possible support to guide Member States in the negotiations.

We consider this approach to be all the more logical and rational in the light of the power, trust and confidence that the President of the General Assembly has placed in him and which we have all unanimously approved. However, in the event that the chair should continue to hesitate to come up with a text, an approach driven by Member States will remain a viable alternative. In any case, we have no excuse to fail the expectations of the heads of State and Government contained in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1), which, inter alia, calls for an early and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that Mauritius remains steadfast in its support for the Ezulwini Consensus, which calls for two seats for Africa in the permanent membership category, with all the rights and privileges which that category confers, including the right of veto so long as it exists. Furthermore, we reiterate our unequivocal support for India and for a Latin American and Caribbean country as candidates for permanent membership in a reformed Security Council.

The time for consultations and exhaustive deliberations are over. We need to act and act now, as was rightly pointed out by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines yesterday (see A/64/PV.44). In this context, we look forward to the resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations, with your blessing, Sir, at the earliest possible date.

Mr. Muita (Kenya): On behalf of my delegation, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting of the General

Assembly. Let me at the outset associate my delegation's statement with that made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States and that made by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. I also wish to thank the President of the Security Council for the report he has presented (A/64/2), as well as the Permanent Mission of Uganda for its efforts in drafting this year's report.

My delegation has taken note of the focus and attention that the Security Council has paid to situations of conflict in Africa, including the high-level debate on peace and security in Africa held in March 2009 (see S/PV.6092). We welcome the Council's mission to Africa, which included visits to Ethiopia, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia, to learn first-hand about the situation on the ground. We also note with appreciation that the Council adopted a number of important resolutions on fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia, which sends a clear signal to the world of the international resolve to combat this menace.

We are pleased to note the progress made in the improvement of the Council's working methods. The report fulfils the Council's obligation under the United Nations Charter and constitutes part of its commitment to increasing transparency and accountability. We welcome the measures that the Council has taken to conduct its business in a more open and inclusive manner. It is our hope, therefore, that this spirit of engagement with the general membership of the United Nations is an indication of the Council's intention to genuinely and substantially improve its working methods in order to meet the expectations of this Assembly. Like others, we note that, while there has been progress in the working methods of the Council, there is still much room for improvement so as to enable the Council to achieve transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.

Turning to agenda item 119 on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, we note that this item has been on the agenda of this Assembly for over 10 years now. Progress on this issue has been slow and difficult because of the different interests, aspirations and objectives that Members have. However, if we are serious about the need to democratize the United Nations, we have to work harder to bring closer our different viewpoints towards a common point of convergence that would address the hopes and aspirations of all.

As our challenges become more and more global, the world is increasingly turning to the United Nations to find a common global path to resolve the most intractable difficulties facing humanity. There is clear recognition of the central role that the United Nations plays in mapping out common solutions. Therefore, in order to better equip the United Nations to meet these challenges, it is imperative that the Organization adapt and change to reflect current realities. In particular, the Security Council must be enlarged and made more democratic and representative of today's world. In that enlargement, Africa needs to be accommodated, including in the permanent category, with all the rights and privileges commensurate with permanent membership.

As the Prime Minister of Kenya reminded this Assembly during his address on Friday, 25 September 2009,

> "The world can no longer continue to marginalize a continent that is home to nearly one billion people. That is wrong in principle, but even more, it is wrong in practice. We cannot find sustainable solutions to our challenges when such a large part of humanity is given so little voice and role in that quest for peace" (*A/64/PV.8*).

Member States have demonstrated a keen interest in the process of reform, as evidenced by the robust engagement throughout the first, second and third round of negotiations, and we believe that the spirit for further debate on the matter is still alive and burning. The momentum thus generated during the course of the sixty-third session of the Assembly has to be maintained, and indeed we need to move forward towards concrete proposals aimed at democratizing the United Nations.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that, after years of discussions and negotiations on this crucial issue, it is now time that we strive for consensus, bring together those elements that unite us and strive for a solution that will garner the widest possible political acceptance for a reformed Council.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation wishes to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for scheduling this joint debate on agenda item 9, on the report submitted to the General

Assembly on the activities of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009 (A/64/2), and on agenda item 119 on the question of Security Council reform. We equally thank Austria's presidency of the Security Council for introducing the report, and Uganda, whose duty it was, in presiding over the Council for the month of July, to compile the report.

It is evident from the report before us that the Security Council had a busy and productive session, with 228 formal meetings, of which 205 were open to the public and 18 were specifically with troop-contributing countries. In addition, 53 resolutions were adopted, while 43 presidential statements and 35 press statements were issued during the period under review.

At this juncture, let me ally my delegation with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group.

We appreciate the opportunity provided for informal consultations with non-Council members during the compilation of the report, a laudable precedent set by Viet Nam in July 2008. We further commend the attention given to Africa and the appropriate actions taken on some conflict situations on that continent, as well as the continuous review on a regular basis of the ongoing peacebuilding efforts in four African countries.

The strengthening of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, including the African Union, is much appreciated, as is the ongoing debate on that issue in the Council. It is our fervent hope that all the thorny problems will be resolved in due course so that the issue can be given the priority attention it deserves.

The visit of Council members to the headquarters of the African Union and some of the hotspots in Africa should not only facilitate an exchange of views and interaction but also provide the opportunity for a first-hand assessment of the situation on the ground. We hope that these exchanges and interactions will continue and be improved upon, and we thank Council members for their enduring contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Notwithstanding these facts, we observe that the format of the report has not changed from the previous years. In its present form, it is more of a narrative, lacking in-depth information and analysis. My delegation would therefore prefer to see a situation whereby the informal consultations with non-Council members commence during the first draft of the report. We also want to emphasize the need for the report to reflect the issues that the Council has deliberated upon but on which no decisions have been taken.

As regards reform of the Security Council, we would like to reiterate the following. First, the great strides made during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly gave birth to decision 62/557 and ushered in the intergovernmental negotiations. That decision remains a watershed after the lacklustre period of the Open-ended Working Group. In this regard, we would like to pay glowing tribute to Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann for the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, contained in document A/63/47. Mr. Zahir Tanin, our indefatigable chairman, also deserves our commendation for his outstanding work during the past year, which has no doubt contributed to his reappointment.

Delegations and groups have been given adequate opportunity to express their views and positions exhaustively on all five variables contained in decision 62/557. We therefore see no use for the continuation of the Open-ended Working Group, notwithstanding paragraph 17 (c) of the Working Group's report.

We maintain the view that any reform of the United Nations will not be complete without an increase in the size and composition of the Security Council so as to reflect current global trends and realities. Such a reform should make the governance structure of the Council more representative, more efficient, more transparent and more legitimate, given the series of changes that have taken place in power relations over the past 60 years. This will also enable the Council to gain in stature and credibility, especially as several political and economic actors have emerged on the international scene with the capacity to contribute immensely to the maintenance of international peace and security and to regional stability. A reformed Security Council should therefore provide an opportunity for greater access and effective participation for small and large States alike, such that no Member State should be marginalized or given undue representation.

Nigeria supports the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on reform of the Security Council. We deplore, however, the foot-dragging approach of some members, which have formed the habit of introducing inexplicable variables to distract from the ongoing negotiations process. We believe that the time has come for us to work towards achieving concrete results on those elements on which Member States have expressed their preferences during the series of negotiations.

The case of Africa is a clear demonstration of the lack of equity in the Council. A region with 53 members remains unrepresented in the permanent-seat category of the Security Council; nor has it fared better in the non-permanent category, with only three seats. It is in this regard that we call for this historical injustice to be redressed, so that for the 26 seats proposed for the permanent and non-permanent categories, Africa will be given special consideration, with at least two representatives in the permanent category and five in the non-permanent category. Other regions currently underrepresented, such as the Caribbean, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, Asia and the small island developing States, should be given their fair due.

The working methods of the Security Council should not be the prerogative of members of the Council alone, especially given the expanding activities undertaken by the Council with their attendant financial, legal and security implications for Council and non-Council members alike. We further call for the Council's decision-making process to be transparent and accountable. This will encourage more non-Council members to develop more interest in the activities of the Council and get more involved in sharing its burden. In this regard, Nigeria supports the proposals on transparency, accountability and other measures proposed by the group of five small nations. We urge Member States to deeply reflect on those proposals and give them the necessary support.

Nigeria equally supports an enhanced relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter. The Council must avoid encroaching on the responsibilities and competencies of the General Assembly.

We believe that the time is ripe for the chairman of the intergovernmental negotiations to produce a composite paper containing proposals and views of Member States and assessing the level of acceptability of those proposals.

To conclude and on behalf of the Government and people of Nigeria, allow me to express our profound gratitude to all Member States for the mandate given to us through their votes on 15 October 2009 to contribute to the efforts to promote and maintain international peace and security. We will guard this mandate jealously and put it to the service not only of Africa, but of the international community at large. Our efforts in the Council will be characterized by solidarity, cooperation, commitment and consultation. We believe that, through forthright determination, we can all stand together and muster the desired political will that will lead to a reformed Security Council.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this joint meeting, which provides a good opportunity to reflect on the activities of the Security Council as well as on the Council's ongoing reform process.

I also wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria and President of the Security Council for the month of November 2009, for presenting the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly (A/64/2). I would also like to thank the delegation of Uganda for its efforts in preparing the report and coordinating it with Member States.

The report provides an accurate account of the Council's work and demonstrates the multiplicity of the issues that are on its agenda. It also points to a heavy workload whereby African issues, particularly within the context of peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, remain at the forefront. Finally, the report points, albeit indirectly, to many of the important challenges that lie ahead for the Council and, indeed, for our Organization as a whole.

As a member of the Council for the term 2009-2010, Turkey will continue to provide its own perspective and contributions in addressing those challenges during its Council membership and beyond. We have also carefully listened to the views expressed by Member States regarding the nature of the report. As a member of the Council, we will do our utmost in taking them on board, to the extent possible, in the preparation of next year's report.

I would also like to take this opportunity to briefly reiterate Turkey's position on Security Council reform. Turkey remains fully committed to reform of the Council that will render it more democratic, representative, accountable and transparent. Although much has been accomplished in this direction in recent years, there is still much room for improvement of the working methods of the Council to further enhance its transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. We therefore encourage the Council to continue its efforts to that end. In addition, we also believe that Security Council reform is closely related to the revitalization of the General Assembly and that, hence, these two processes should continue to proceed simultaneously.

My country has taken an active part in the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform as well as the subsequent intergovernmental negotiations that began in February 2009. Although the past three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have been useful in examining the negotiable elements and exploring the basic linkages among them, we believe that the membership remains divided on such issues as the categories of membership and the question of the veto.

We do not see much merit in dwelling too much on those issues in the forthcoming rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations. Rather, we should try to make progress by setting aside for the moment those divergent views and concentrating instead on those ideas that have the potential to secure the widest possible political support among members. Let me briefly explain how we could still make progress in the face of our differences.

As a member of the Council which began serving on it after almost half a century of its existence, Turkey benefits immensely from this unique experience and responsibility. We believe that that experience should not be the sole prerogative of a privileged minority, but has to be available to all aspiring Member States, large or small, developed or least developed.

In particular, those Member States that are endowed with the means and capabilities to provide peace and stability in their region and beyond should be allowed to take a more active part in the work of the Council. We would therefore be supportive of the extended representation of such Member States on the Council. We believe that the intermediate approach, consisting of renewable or longer-term seats, could provide such an extended representation. We stand ready to further explore this idea in subsequent rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Another way to move forward despite our differences of opinion as regards categories of membership may be to think of ways to uphold the principle of regional representation and to reach a more equitable geographical distribution in the Council. Such an approach could be less objectionable to many of us than discussing if and how the permanent membership of a particular group of Member States could enhance regional representation in the Council.

The present composition of the Security Council reflects a certain balance of power — that of the post-Second World War period. Most of the proposals that are presently on the table aim to continue to modify that balance of power and adapt it to the realities of today's world. However, we also believe that there is a need for the reformed Council to reflect a set of common values, in addition to a broader power structure.

Indeed, the composition of the Council should be based more on values and principles. Democracy, multilateralism, accountability and regional representation are some of these values and principles. They fully coincide with the principles and values that our group advocates and stands for. In the future, we will continue to build upon and be guided by those principles in a constructive manner.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to associate ourselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group. I would like to add some observations which Libya believes are important for Security Council reform.

There is no doubt that the Security Council, in its current composition, reflects the balance of power that prevailed in 1945, when most current Member States were under the yoke of colonization. The African continent was most affected by those arrangements, which were reached after the Second World War, including the composition of the Security Council, which was achieved without the input of most Members of the United Nations.

Now that African countries have achieved their independence, they represent more than one fourth of

the membership of the United Nations. We must give them their fair share and recognize their rights. We must rectify the historic injustice done to those countries and put an end to their marginalization. To give those countries the chance to be fairly represented in the Security Council, we should give Africa two permanent seats with all the competence and privileges of the current permanent seats, including the veto privilege, and five non-permanent seats, in accordance with African demands as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. One of those two permanent seats should be given now, before the end of the intergovernmental negotiations, so that Africa can be on an equal footing with other regional groups in the process of intergovernmental negotiations.

The current composition of the Security Council in the permanent category, made up as it is of certain countries acting in their national capacity, has been unsuccessful. We all know that the Security Council in its current composition has failed to be a democratic, transparent means for achieving international peace and security. This is due to the control exerted by certain permanent members over the Council who have abused the veto to promote their narrow national interests.

It is incumbent on all of us to rectify this situation, to put an end to national selfishness and to think of a way to preserve the United Nations as a forum for collective work, in order to maintain international peace and security, achieve development and prosperity and ensure the enjoyment of basic rights and freedoms for all. We must all work together so that the Security Council is credible and a radical change is brought about in the permanent seats by replacing these seats with others allocated to regional groups such as the European Union, the African Union, a confederation of Latin American States, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Russian Federation, the United States and the League of Arab States.

All States representing such groups should have the same rights and obligations. The veto right should belong to all or to none. On the other hand, the competencies of the Security Council should be transferred to the General Assembly so that the Council can be the tool for the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly, which is the legitimate representative of all States. We still believe that the report of the Security Council does not give a clear picture about what actually happens in the Security Council. It does not reflect the stated commitment of the Council to General Assembly resolutions, particularly the commitment to refrain from too much narrative and to include an analysis of the bases upon which the resolutions of the Council were adopted. It should reflect the position of other States, particularly permanent-member States. The report should indicate the reasons that prevented the Council from taking firm positions concerning important questions having to do with international peace and security.

We hope that the report of the Security Council will in the future be more useful. It should include the details of what is preventing the Council from carrying out its mandate in the maintenance of international peace and security. We hope that the General Assembly will act within the appropriate time frame to make up for the occasional failure of the Security Council owing to the use of the veto privilege.

Mr. Goledzinowski (Australia): The advantage of speaking so late in this debate is that most things have already been said, so I will at least try to keep my comments brief.

First, we thank the Security Council for the submission of its annual report (A/64/2) and the Permanent Representative of Austria, Ambassador Mayr-Harting, for his introduction of the report to the General Assembly.

We do appreciate the consultation process offered to non-members of the Security Council by the delegations of Uganda, Viet Nam and Austria, but, like so many others who have spoken before me, we do regret the absence of robust analysis of the Council's work, which we think would make it a much more valuable document.

On the vexed question of Security Council reform, while the exchange today and yesterday has been intellectually very interesting and substantively very important, we wonder about how useful it has really been. This is not intended as a criticism of any of those who have participated in this debate. It is merely an observation of the fact that little progress has been achieved thus far in closing the gaps between our respective positions. Nevertheless, as a delegation, we have paid very close attention to what has been said today and yesterday.

Mr. Mohamad (Sudan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We have followed the debate very closely and we have paid very close attention to all of the views that have been expressed. Against that background, Australia continues to support an enlargement of the Council in both categories: permanent and elected members.

In terms of permanent membership, we believe that that expansion should take into account appropriate geographic representation and acknowledge contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security. On that basis, in our view, a country like Japan, for example, should be included as a permanent member, because of the weight it carries in the international system and the contribution that it makes.

We also envisage that an expanded Council would include appropriate representation for Africa, a region that includes more than a quarter of the United Nations membership. African delegates have told us, over recent meetings, that they are seeking a minimum of two seats in the Council as permanent seats. That seems to us reasonable. One of the very early speakers yesterday referred to Africa's absence from the ranks of the permanent membership as an historical injustice. That does not seem to be an unreasonable observation. We also support redressing the absence of permanent representation for Latin America.

Separate from the question of expansion of the Council, we as a delegation are very focused on the issue of reform of the working methods of the Security Council, which we think is absolutely vital to enhancing the credibility of the United Nations and its capacity to fulfil the goals set out in our Charter.

I would like to take this opportunity to also thank Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan for his continued efforts and diligence as chair in the negotiations seeking to bring Member States closer to a consensus. He has a very difficult job, and we would like to assure him of Australia's continued support and confidence. I would also like to welcome the offer made at the opening of this debate by the President of the General Assembly to take a greater role in the proceedings and his offer to help lead us towards a consensus on this important issue.

We look forward to contributing constructively to the next round of negotiations, with the guiding principle of achieving a Security Council that is more representative and therefore acts with greater authority, unity and credibility. However, there is also one danger in our proceedings, which we think we have be cognizant of. That is that if we fail to make progress, it is entirely possible that the increasing divisions among Member States and the increasing focus on that one issue — that nut that we fail to crack — may start to distract us from other important elements of business and could begin to negatively affect the tone and atmosphere in which we do our other work. That is something we have to be very careful of, and we must ensure that we are wary of that trap.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): I should like to thank the President for organizing this joint debate on agenda items 9 and 119. I also wish to thank Ambassador Mayr-Harting of Austria for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/64/2).

I want to briefly address agenda item 119, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. I take note of the President's strong interest in advancing such reform, and I am delighted that he has retained Ambassador Tanin as the facilitator for such a difficult task.

Over the past 12 months we noticed a substantial improvement in the negotiation process on such fundamental reform. We strongly believe that we have to renew our efforts to achieve a satisfactory compromise on Security Council reform within a reasonable period of time. A larger Council, more geographically balanced representation and more transparent working methods, taking account of new world realities — these are very fundamental and just issues. Our difficulty in reaching a comprehensive agreement lies on our inability to subordinate our national interests to international ones.

We have to work towards a compromise solution that will not please any of us at a national level but will enhance the confidence of all of us in the Security Council and its crucial role at the United Nations. San Marino is ready to do its part in this collegial effort. We Member States do not have the luxury to fail again and again and again. We must move forward in the interests of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the United Nations.

Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President for having convened this meeting. At the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, under the guidance and leadership of Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the intergovernmental

negotiation process finally began to seriously consider, once and for all, the pressing reforms needed in the Security Council. We express our deepest recognition to Father Miguel and to our brother Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for their efforts. We welcome the continuity of this reform process in the person of Ambassador Tanin, whom we thank for his valuable leadership.

As I have just mentioned, we have finally seen the beginning of the intergovernmental negotiations, which the vast majority of Member States had been demanding for several decades. The position of Nicaragua on this matter has been expressed with sufficient clarity in the past. We will, therefore, be very brief and to the point.

There exists an almost-universal consensus favouring abolition of the veto right. We believe that we must move forward accordingly. The use, abuse and/or threat of the use of the veto — an anachronism and anti-democratic practice — must be corrected in these reforms. As we move forward with these reforms, which we hope will ultimately result in the elimination of the veto, we support proposals aimed at limiting or restraining its use. In any case, the General Assembly should have the right to override any veto by the permanent members of the Security Council.

An enormous majority agrees on the need for a genuine, profound reform that includes the expansion of Council membership in both categories — that of permanent members, with all attendant prerogatives and privileges, including the right to the veto, and that of non-permanent members. Expansion in both categories should be carried out in accordance with genuine equitable geographical distribution.

Nicaragua firmly supports the initiatives and demands of our brothers of the African Union. The African positions on the veto should be incorporated and Council membership should be enlarged to 25 or 26. We also support the initiative of our brothers, the members of the Caribbean Community.

The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is a topic of vital importance in the democratization, legitimacy, representative nature and efficiency of the United Nations. That relationship should therefore be examined in all its dimensions, including all the proposals, which should be taken very seriously into account if we want to achieve genuine reform of the Security Council.

A matter of particular concern is the need to democratize the process for electing the Secretary-General, which should be done through a real election in the General Assembly. Similarly, the Security Council must not interfere in affairs which fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly.

We have already said that the working methods of the Security Council leave much to be desired. There is a need for working methods that transform the Council into a more transparent, inclusive and participatory organ, and which render it accountable to the General Assembly in an effective way. Nicaragua supports and will support proposals put forward with that intent.

The historic aspirations and demands of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia in these Security Council reforms must no longer be blocked or denied. To that end, we hope for the immediate continuation of the intergovernmental negotiations. It is indispensable that we have for that a document to serve as a basis for our work and which summarizes the positions of Member States that have received broad support.

Mr. Goutondji (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is grateful to the President for having convened this plenary meeting to examine items 9 and 119 of the agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

My delegation endorses the statement made on these items by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group (see A/64/PV.43).

We should like to express our sincere appreciation to the President of the Security Council for his brilliant presentation of the Council's annual report. And it is clear when one reads the report that during the reporting period the Council carried out an important range of activities to tackle serious challenges linked to peacekeeping and international security. The Council took very significant decisions, such as increasing the number of staff of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and adopting two resolutions to combat sexual violence against women and children, a criminal practice that has been turned into a weapon of war.

Strengthening cooperation with regional organizations, in particular the African Union, has also seen remarkable progress, such as following consideration of the Prodi report on peacekeeping in Africa (see A/63/666). This made it possible to establish terms and conditions for the financing of peacekeeping operations, carried out by the Union under a Security Council mandate.

The Council should continue to think more about various aspects of this question in order to contribute to ensuring that the 10-year capacity-building programme for the AU is fully implemented. We also welcome the regular visits by the Council, as well as the joint sessions with the Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa.

Over and beyond what the Council has done in terms of fulfilling its mission, there are critical situations in which the expectations of Member States have either still not been met or have not been met on time, because of differences of opinion within the Council. If the Council were to establish a uniform practice for dealing with the same kinds of acts and were to focus on preventive rather than reactive measures, it would significantly increase its clout and its credibility.

In that regard, it is important that the Security Council find the right method to react promptly to situations that endanger thousands of people, as was the case in the Gaza conflict. When the lives of civilians are in danger, one day of dithering or arguing is one day too much, and it is better to take early action or warn the actors than to vote on sanctions afterwards or prosecution as retribution for abuse committed that could have been avoided had a credible deterrent stance been taken.

We commend the efforts made by the Council to promote transparency of its decisions by applying corrective measures to make its activities more inclusive and more accessible to Member States. This is part of the role of listening and openness that we expect from the Council. We encourage the members of the Council to continue their consideration of its working methods and to closely examine the various proposals made by Member States seeking to strengthen the Council's effectiveness.

In that regard, my delegation believes in the principle that the bodies must remain masters of their own procedure. But that prerogative must be exercised in a way that makes their work predictable and thus more credible. In other words, the Security Council should be at the forefront in reforming its working methods. Member States are urgently calling for such reform, so that they can feel a part of how the Council deals with situations falling within its remit, and the Council cannot avoid this if it wishes to continue to enjoy their confidence.

A revision of the Council's working methods could compensate a bit for the lack of legitimacy stemming from the Council's inappropriate structure, given the current geopolitical situation. The significant changes that followed the end of the cold war must be borne in mind.

Over and above the nearly fourfold increase in the number of States Members of the Organization, from 50 to approximately 200, there has also been the emergence of new Powers that are able and willing to shoulder their global responsibilities. The collective security system must integrate them at the appropriate level, so that it maintains its full credibility as the universal framework for tackling challenges facing humanity. Thus, indefinitely postponing reform of the Council, one that seeks to have equitable representation of Member States within it, is likely to be fraught with risks.

Benin supports expanding the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent membership categories, and it is not the only country that thinks so. The intergovernmental negotiations that took place this year have shown one thing: the vast majority of Member States are in favour of the formula of expanding the Council in both categories.

Clearly, this is not the time for experimentation, which is what the intermediary or interim formula proposes. Such schemes stem from national constraints rather than from an awareness of the challenges facing humanity and the interests of the international community as a whole. So, in this regard, moving the Council away from the realm of decision-making and taking responsibility into the realm of experimentation is only going to weaken it and lead to an erosion of its authority.

We want a representative Council that has its full legitimacy, so that it can take action that is both decisive and responsible to credibly manage the challenges facing humanity, because humanity needs to

have a constitutive integrated authority to cope with those challenges.

Let us make progress based on certainties rather than suppositions. One thing is certain, because it is part of the logic of functionality and capacity: the Security Council consists of its permanent members and non-permanent members and nothing else, and it cannot embody the legitimacy required if it continues to exclude Africa from the category of permanent members and thereby prolongs the historic injustice done to that continent when the Organization was established.

The Council cannot be representative if it continues to impose on Africans the agony of enduring the absence of their worthy representatives at conclaves in which their destiny is being decided. The demands of Africa are well known. The Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration are unequivocal: at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats. It is a matter of arithmetic, not variable geometry.

That said, we must adopt the best methods for negotiation in order to make rapid progress on working out a consensual definition of the shape of Council reform. We urge the facilitator to present a summary document at the start of the next negotiation cycle. That would mean that we could start the decision-making process as soon as possible.

The reform will either be democratic or not. In either case, we will be making a choice. It is a choice between order and disorder, salvation and perdition. Let us make sure that we take the right decision at the right time.

Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) (*spoke in French*): Year after year, an impressive number of colleagues come up to this rostrum, one after the other, to express their views on the report of the Security Council. That is a good thing, because we all understand the importance of the role of the Security Council. I think that we have heard here what we in my delegation consider to be the expression of exasperation, a degree of frustration and prudent optimism. I personally here would like to express optimism.

The report introduced to us excellently illustrates the significant work accomplished by the members of the Security Council. Here, I wish to pay tribute to them. I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for the work that they have carried out over the period under review: 53 resolutions, 43 presidential statements, 55 press releases. I am mentioning just a few of them, because that is not all the work that they have performed. We know how the Security Council works, because our country was represented on it about 13 years ago.

But everyone knows the degree of determination and conviction required to reach agreement on a resolution. The number 53 does not by itself indicate the amount of work required. Much negotiation and discussion is needed, in private, of course. Much work is needed, and I think the General Assembly should be willing to recognize that work, insofar as it is we ourselves, the General Assembly, who have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 24 of the Charter is clear. We have not abdicated our duties and obligations as the General Assembly — the Assembly of all nations, all seated on an equal plane — but we judged that it was essential to create an instrument, an organ able, as the Charter says, to respond promptly and efficiently to emergencies. That is the specific nature of the Security Council.

When we take up the discussion of the report — and I will come back to this point, which is tied to questions of reform, et cetera — we must retain that central idea of primary responsibility, which means that somewhere there exists a subsidiary responsibility. There is no primary responsibility without subsidiary responsibility. We here are responsible for what happens, and it falls to the members of the General Assembly to fulfil our obligations and to fully assume that responsibility. Article 10 of the Charter, for example, is very clear. Article 10 provides that — allow me to repeat very briefly — the Assembly may discuss questions relating to international peace and security, with the understanding that we are careful to exclude matters that are the exclusive responsibility of the Council, as foreseen in Article 12.

We also have the responsibility to address certain situations, and I think that in this matter too there is much to do here in the General Assembly to ensure that we fulfil our responsibilities, that we proceed to urgent reforms in the matter of the Assembly's working methods to be in tune with those responsibilities that are shared.

I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for his report, which, as I said earlier, quite amply illustrates the work accomplished by our colleagues who sit on the Council. We are most pleased that among them there are three representatives of the African continent. We know that the Council turns its attention very often — perhaps even too often — to conflict situations in Africa. That is why we Africans believe we have a specific responsibility in relation to the Security Council, and not only as participants in debates when the debates are open. Here, we are pleased to note that open debates are more and more common — and that needs to be stated as a simple fact — and that, fortunately, we whose countries appear on the Council agenda are increasingly involved in the discussions. That is as it should be.

The work that went into preparing the Security Council's report shows the progress that has been made. Under the auspices of the representative of Viet Nam last year, fruitful communication was established that allowed our ideas and opinions to be taken into account in the preparation of the report, which was very well handled by the representative of Uganda, whom we thank.

Indeed there is much yet to do, but we should not be in too great a rush. Those who are here long enough know that even if we have not entirely reached our goals there has been progress in the matter of the increased transparency that we have wanted for the Security Council; in the matter of respecting Article 31 and 32, which deal with the participation of non-members; and even in the matter of rule 48 of the provisional rules of procedure — still provisional, as a colleague has just remarked, a colleague who would like open debates to be more common than closed meetings. But what matters is results. We should encourage the Council members to make still more progress, but more than anything else we should try to foment a dynamic that is conducive to the changes that we call for with all our hearts.

I would like to address a question that is tied to equitable representation and the expansion of membership in the Council. We have heard brilliant ideas and suggestions that we believe are capable of pushing the process we have embarked on forward into a much more official sphere. We finally decided to carry on intergovernmental negotiations, at the energetic instigation of our colleague Mr. Tanin of Afghanistan.

Now we should not only take an interest in these matters but demonstrate more rationality. We need to know how not to lose our heads in addressing the question of fundamental reforms in the Security Council. We believe that no one should come here with preconceptions, with ideas already formed. We are in the midst of a negotiation dynamic, which is no place for unbending positions. Of course we all started out with negotiating positions, as we should, but we should come here in a spirit of open-mindedness, willing not just to listen to what is said around us but to take it into account when that is what is called for. It is a matter of a process of give and take.

We cannot come here to impose our point of view on others, but it goes without saying that the Security Council as it exists today cannot continue. We must recognize, as was rightly said earlier, the changes that have occurred in the world. We are no longer in 1945; that is obvious. We must act so that the Council, through representation that is more democratic, can take those changes into account. We must act so that a more open space can enable other Members to enter and play the role envisaged for them today, given their economic and financial clout, surely, but above all given the role that they are already playing as troop contributors and financial providers in the budgetary realm — because there must be a budget and there must also be countries that, fortunately, contribute to financing the activities of the United Nations.

Therefore, we must take all of that into account so that — taking inspiration from the provisions of Article 23, which clearly defines the conditions according to which a State can accede to the Security Council — we open the Council in a way that is democratic but not brutal. We must act in such a way that everyone is included in the give-and-take process so that we arrive at the same conclusion. That is, the Security Council will be better able to respond to its obligations, to fulfil the role that devolves to it by the terms of Article 24, inter alia, and to be more effective in responding to conflicts and challenges.

To do that we must demonstrate a constructive spirit here in this Assembly. We must enter the negotiations with enough open-mindedness so that we can move forward.

As I said earlier, however, let us act wisely. We are not going to have a revolution that upsets everything or turns everything upside down. We must

ensure that the structures can be maintained in terms of their effectiveness and usefulness. We need to ensure that while we reconcile democratic representation, we can also preserve the primary characteristic of the Security Council, namely its efficiency and its ability to respond promptly to the urgent needs that crop up.

It has been rightly pointed out here that we are increasingly observing that the Security Council is, to put it politely, looking at far too many questions. Perhaps it might be interesting to look at why the Council looks at all those issues. We are in a globalized world. We are all in it. When there is a food crisis in one country, that food crisis can endanger peace and stability in that country. When women are raped in a country, that is a cause for concern for everybody. So I think that, without moving away from the principles that we all should observe, and while bearing in mind the prerogatives of the various bodies here, we need to ensure that we can work together in a holistic, coordinated, cooperative way to ensure that global peace and stability are maintained.

I would like to believe that we have made progress even if the progress is not as visible as one would like. But I think that if we maintain the momentum that we have already given the negotiations, thanks to the dynamic work of Ambassador Tanin and to the resolve of each regional group, I think we will be in a good position to achieve our objectives, in other words, to be able to proceed to structural reform that takes into account the need to safeguard the principal role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security.

To conclude, I would like to say that we have always shown a lot of interest in this issue. We will demonstrate the necessary constructive spirit in the dynamic that we want to create and engage. I hope that all delegations here will do the same so that we can finally undertake the reform of the Security Council in a responsible, efficient and certainly progressive way as well as in a definitive way.

Mr. Kaiser (Czech Republic): Let me start by thanking the current President of the Security Council, Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, the Permanent Representative of Austria, for his presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/64/2). I would like to also acknowledge the efforts deployed by the delegation of Uganda in the preparation of the report. In our opinion, the annual reports are an important means to ensure the necessary transparency of the Council and its accountability to the broad United Nations membership. Further improvements in the quality of the reports, namely, from the perspective of providing a more analytical overview, should nevertheless be encouraged. Such efforts are an indispensable part of broader efforts to improve the Council's working methods.

I would like to express the appreciation of my delegation for the Assembly President's commitment to move forward the process of the reform of the Security Council. We believe that during the Assembly's sixty-third session, momentum was created that should not be lost.

After 15 years of consultations in the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, the intergovernmental negotiations were launched, as mandated by decision 62/557. During three rounds of these negotiations, all the main elements of the reform were thoroughly examined from various perspectives. The vast majority of Member States took an active part in those deliberations. In this context, I would like to commend the dedication, determination and impartiality that Ambassador Tanin has displayed when steering our debates. We are thankful to the President for reappointing him, as communicated to us in his letter of 13 October.

There is a broad agreement that Security Council reform is long overdue and that we have to redouble our efforts in order to fulfil the task laid upon us by our political leaders at the most recent World Summit, namely, to expeditiously conduct a genuine reform of this key body of the United Nations system. It is therefore crucial that we resume the intergovernmental process without unnecessary delays, as envisaged in decision 63/565. We have to set up an ambitious workplan that would enable us to arrive at tangible and substantive results by the end of the current session of the Assembly.

The debates held over past years have provided ample opportunity to clarify the positions of all actors. We all know very well what the main issues are. In order to avoid an impasse, we should now focus on options that garner broad support and thus may serve as a point of departure for building consensus. However, those options that have acquired only limited

support should not become stumbling blocks to the advancement of the reform. In other words, we have to narrow down the options for a meaningful and achievable restructuring of the Council.

As we stated during the most recent round of the intergovernmental negotiations, we believe that the best catalyst for such a process would be a paper prepared by the Chair. Such a document should be further developed and should only serve as a tool used by Member States in identifying the possible common ground without prejudicing the final outcome. In this regard, we have full trust that the Chair will continue to carry out his functions in full transparency and impartiality.

The position of the Czech Republic on the reform is well known, and therefore I will not go into details. However, let me underline that we share fully the conviction of a vast majority of Member States, expressed clearly and loudly during the intergovernmental process, that the basis of a genuine reform of the Council is its expansion in both categories: permanent and non-permanent.

The reform of the Council should also redress the underrepresentation of some regional groups, namely Africa. Therefore we endorse allocation of two new permanent seats each to the regions of Africa and Asia, one to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and one to the Western European and other States group. However, the enlargement should not be designed at the expense of the small and mid-sized countries, which represent the vast majority of the United Nations family. Therefore, the enlargement should also involve the addition of non-permanent seats, including one seat for the Group of Eastern European States.

The enlargement of the Council in both categories is, as I said, at the core of a genuine reform. At the same time, it is only one part, albeit an essential one, of a more complex task. The enlargement should be accompanied by other measures, inter alia the improvement of its working methods, while the overall objective is to make it more representative as well as more accessible and accountable to the whole United Nations membership.

The Czech Republic, a mid-sized country that strongly believes in effective multilateralism, supports such a solution, which would balance the adaptation of the Council to the realities of today's world and the strengthening of its legitimacy on the one hand, with an increase of its effectiveness and capability to fulfil its primary responsibility to maintain global peace and security on the other hand.

We very much look forward to the speedy resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations and continue to stand ready to join them in a spirit of much-needed flexibility and compromise. We commit ourselves to examining all proposals with an open mind, especially those aimed at breaking the deadlock, including the idea of an intermediary solution, provided such solutions prove capable of serving as a means to bridge the gaps between entrenched positions.

Let me conclude by appealing to all of us to engage constructively in the substantive negotiations with a sense of urgency, so that we will be able to adapt the Security Council, the key organ of the United Nations, to the new realities and challenges of today's world and ensure its role and legitimacy in the twenty-first century.

Ms. Ome (Bhutan): I would like to join others in thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting and in thanking the Permanent Representative of Austria, the President of the Security Council, for presenting the Security Council's annual report (A/64/2).

My delegation appreciates the extensive work carried out by the Security Council. The achievements of the Security Council are impressive and have contributed greatly to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Security Council is the principal organ in the United Nations with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations. Therefore, it is important that we give priority to bringing about the much-needed reform of the Council, especially with regard to its composition and working methods. The reform will make the Council more representative and accountable and will reflect the changing international scene.

Over the past year, much has been achieved on the issue of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have been conducted, and Member States, regional groups and other groups have made known their positions and proposals. The five key issues and a

number of options have been debated. What is important now is to build upon the progress we have achieved and work towards moving on to the next stage, by closing ranks and narrowing our options to our commonalities. Some of the commonalities that could be considered are those that have overwhelming support, for example, the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories and ensuring representation of underrepresented regions and developing countries in both categories.

In addition, a document or text prepared by the Chair or Member States would help to serve as a basis for our next round of negotiations.

My delegation welcomes the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations. We are confident that he will continue to ably discharge his responsibility. We offer him our fullest cooperation.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I call on the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See): In thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the reform of the Security Council, I gladly take this opportunity to congratulate the Chairman of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, for his skilled and determined conducting of the negotiations. Among the topics of the reform, my delegation would like to concentrate particularly on the question of the veto power.

Many valid and clear positions and views have been expressed with regard to the right of veto. At this stage of the intergovernmental negotiations, however, the abolishment of the veto seems to be the least feasible. Hence, its reform is more suitable and realistic. Experience teaches us that there is good reason for advancing positions in favour of reform of the veto with the aim of limiting its exercise. On so many occasions in history, its use has slowed down and even obstructed the solution of issues crucial to international peace and security, thereby allowing the perpetration of violations of freedom and human dignity. Too often, it is the failure to intervene that does the real damage.

The reform of the veto is all the more necessary at a time when we experience the obvious paradox of a multilateral consensus that continues to be in jeopardy because it is still subordinated to the decisions of a few, whereas the world's problems call for interventions in the form of collective action by the international community.

Against this background, the Holy See recognizes the importance of the view put forward by other delegations that the Security Council's permanent members should commit themselves to a practice of not casting a veto in situations where genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, serious violations of international humanitarian law or similar acts are involved.

At the minimum, in an effort to reach a timely and more representative solution for such grave situations, the number of affirmative votes supporting the Security Council's resolutions should require the concurring vote of no more than two permanent members. Otherwise, as already suggested by other delegations, a permanent member could cast a negative vote, stating that voting against a given proposal should not be understood as a veto and that his opposition is not of such a nature as to warrant the blocking of a decision.

Many agree that the permanent members should show great accountability and transparency in using the right of veto. Before casting such a vote, transparency, flexibility, confidence and political will should already have been a part of the drafting process of a resolution, in order to ensure that States are not effectively vetoing texts before they can be considered by the Council.

Indeed, when it is known that a permanent member would vote against their adoption, many proposed drafts are never formally presented to the Council for a vote. More open dialogue and cooperation between the permanent and other members of the Security Council is crucial to avoid any later obstructions in adopting a resolution. A deeper search for ways of pre-empting and managing conflicts is needed by exploring every possible diplomatic avenue and by giving attention and encouragement to even the faintest sign of dialogue or desire for reconciliation.

The President returned to the Chair.

The decision to extend, limit or abolish the veto lies in the hands of the Member States and will depend on the broadest possible consensus on one of the options. We trust that such a decision would be right

and would favour transparency, equality and justice, reflecting the values of democracy and mutual trust in the work of a reformed Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council (A/64/2)?

It was so decided.

The President: Allow me to now make a few remarks at the end of this debate.

This has been an absorbing debate, the importance of which is evident in the strong participation of the Member States. The value and relevance of considering these two agenda items together is clear from the substantive nature of the views expressed in the debate.

Member States have reiterated the importance that they attach to the work of the Security Council, which they would like to see perform even better, in a more transparent and effective manner in the promotion of international peace and security, which is its primary responsibility. The numerous valuable suggestions for improving the report of the Security Council will, I am sure, receive due consideration.

The debate has also reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to the objective of achieving an early and comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. In that regard, there is strong interest in the intergovernmental negotiations process. There is broad expression of support and confidence for Ambassador Zahir Tanin, who will chair these negotiations on my behalf. The positions and views expressed in the debate will, I am sure, contribute to productive work in the intergovernmental negotiations.

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

Mr. Okuda (Japan): Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing us to exercise our right of reply. My comments are related to the statement by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It is regrettable that we have to respond to what the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said when all other delegations are seriously engaged in the debate on today's topic. I have to say that Japan cannot accept the baseless allegations presented by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about the militaristic ambitions of Japan.

First, Japan firmly believes that the qualifications of a given country for permanent membership in the Security Council should be based on that country's real contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Since its accession to the United Nations, Japan, as a nation committed to peace, has been trying its best to live up to that standard, contributing actively and constructively to the maintenance of international peace and security. Despite the claims made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea this morning, I believe Japan's policies and practices in this regard to date speak for themselves and I trust the judgement of the representatives of Member States here.

Secondly, regarding the reference by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the denial of the past, my delegation cannot accept that either, because Japan has been facing up to its past with sincerity and consistency since the end of the Second World War. With this in mind, Japan has, for over 60 years, consistently dedicated itself to promoting international peace and prosperity and demonstrating its respect for democracy and human rights.

In that context, my delegation would like to reiterate Japan's intention to seek a normalization of relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in accordance with Japan — Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration, by comprehensively resolving the outstanding issues of concern with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and by sincerely settling the unfortunate past, as Prime Minister Hatoyama stated during his address during the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, this year.

With regard to Japan's position on Security Council reform, it has been publicly stated many times in the United Nations and other forums and is well known. Japan stands ready to contribute actively and constructively to international peace and security at any time.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Throughout the intervention that the representative of Japan just made, we had the

impression that the Japanese delegation is not fully aware of why Japan is not yet the appropriate choice for a permanent seat in the Security Council. In order to clarify that issue, my delegation deems it appropriate to stress a few points.

Japan committed massive crimes, such as forcibly drafting 8.4 million Koreans, killing over 1 million and imposing on more than 200,000 Korean women a life of slavery as comfort women for the Japanese army. Japan has claimed that it has done everything it had to do in terms of apologizing for its past crimes. Japan has abused the outstanding issues between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan, while tactfully claiming that it was making an "apology" for its past crimes, whenever it feels required to redress its unfavourable domestic political situation.

In March 2007, former Japanese Prime Minister Abe made the reckless remark that there is no evidence proving the forcible recruitment of comfort women for the Japanese army, and the Deputy Minister of the Cabinet of Japan asserted that the comfort women were prostitutes — I repeat, prostitutes — who were sold — I repeat, sold — by their parents. These are truly inhumane, insane and irresponsible remarks.

Japan is the only country that has neither sincerely reflected on nor made reparations for its crimes against humanity. Fearing that its crimes would be uncovered and made known to the public, Japanese authorities disposed of archives related to such crimes covering several consecutive years and deleted and distorted facts about its past crimes from school textbooks through an official collusion with, and with the approval of, the Government. Most recently, a number of well-known Japanese political figures paid tribute to and honoured war criminals and butchers of human beings as heroes at the Yasukuni shrine. This is the true attitude of Japan towards its blood-stained past crimes. To date, most of the victims of Japanese sex slavery still live in suffering. Japan's persistent denial of its criminal history means that it could certainly commit the same crimes as those of the past again. Granting a permanent seat to such an irresponsible, brazen and two-faced Japan would only result in encouraging that country's long-standing ambition of realizing a Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, which would have very dangerous consequences for United Nations Member States.

If Japan genuinely wishes to be a responsible member of the international community, it should sincerely apologize and make reparations for the crimes it committed in the past. This is the only way for Japan to be recognized as a very responsible Member State of the United Nations. It is not the money — or whatever contribution a Member State might make — that really counts, but its truly sincere and responsible attitude. This is the official and formal position of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on this issue.

Mr. Okuda (Japan): We have explained our position many, many times, as well as when we exercised our right of reply today, and do not intend to do so again. However, we have to put it on record that we cannot accept the baseless allegations, full of insulting language, made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is regrettable that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should use this valuable opportunity for discussing the issue of Security Council reform as a platform for promoting unfair allegations against Japan.

It is simply not possible for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to invoke issues of the past in order to justify its reckless policy of military build-up, including its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development, with no regard for a series of Security Council resolutions, as well as the norms and regulations of the international community. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also pursues a policy of systematic and wanton violation of the human rights of its own citizens that is so heinous that the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in that country says, in paragraph 72, "The violations compromise and threaten not only human rights, but also international peace and security" (A/64/224). The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must totally change its policies on its nuclear weapons development and on human rights before it can talk about the policies of other Members of the United Nations.

Mr. Sin Song Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Just as the representative of Japan has said, it is precisely because of the august and auspicious nature of this Hall, where we are discussing a very important issue, Security Council reform, that my delegation wanted to clarify these issues, because the issues really merit discussion. With regard to the

remarks of Japan's representative, I would like to make some further points. Japan is the very country that is destroying the strategic balance of our region and threatening peace. Japan, which has neither apologized nor made reparations for its past crimes, now joins the United States in developing a missile defence system. This is to clarify who really is the agent threatening peace and stability in our region. In May 2005 Japan annulled its domestic law on the demilitarization of outer space, which had been in force for more than 40 years, thus opening the door for the use of outer space for military purposes by adopting a new main law on outer space.

Since the 1990s, Japan has launched four military spy satellites and has run fanatical intelligence activities against its neighbouring countries. It now plans to launch an early-warning satellite that is to be the eye of a missile defence system, giving Japan a pre-emptive strike capability in outer space. More recently, within Japanese political circles, arguments have emerged in favour of pre-emptive strikes against enemy military bases. It is worth noting that Japan has persisted in its evil intentions by, for instance, condemning the peaceful satellite launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, conducted last April in conformity with every established international legal framework. Japan was the first in line to come knocking at the door of the Security Council in the middle of the night to get the Council to adopt its resolution against my country.

From the point of view of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, this is ridiculous and naïve. Japan is not in any kind of position to blame other countries or urge action on their part. Unless Japan is excluded from the process of reforming the Security Council, reform itself will never be achievable. As we have said repeatedly, the crimes Japan has committed are not just in the past but continue today. Though time moves on, Japan's crimes cannot fade away naturally or be in any way excused. Japan's lack of action regarding its shameful past has led even its closest allies to despair of resolutions urging Japan to purge its past crimes.

A bid for a permanent seat on the Security Council does not gibe with the true picture of Japan's nature at all. Rather than trying to occupy a permanent seat on the Council, it would be advisable for Japan to give more thought to how to atone for its bloody, criminal past once and for all, and to act wisely and appropriately, so that this issue need never be debated at the United Nations General Assembly. This is the only way for Japan to regain the full credibility of the international community.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 9 and agenda item 119.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.