

12 March 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,
at 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 third meeting 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 is called to order.

At the outset, I should like to note that at our last meeting on 5 February 2001 we had agreed on a Programme of Work. This is now available as Conference Room Paper 1 at the document officer's booth.

Delegations will also recall that at our last meeting I had informed them that the Bureau, in keeping with previous practice, intended to deal with Cluster I and Cluster II issues in tandem. To that end we had announced in the Journal that we shall be dealing with Cluster I issues this morning and tomorrow morning. We shall then take up Cluster II issues on Wednesday and Thursday; and revert to Cluster I issues or Cluster II issues as the need may be on Friday.

To this end, I should like to point out that all delegations should have received in their documents last Thursday morning a copy of Conference Room Paper 2 entitled "Decision-making in the Security Council; the veto as a voting instrument in the Security Council".

I would like to stress that the issue of veto as a voting instrument is only one of the questions we need to address in order to facilitate process of reaching general agreement. This paper is submitted by the Bureau in accordance with our Programme of Work where the first item under Cluster I deals with the issue of veto. This paper has been prepared to facilitate discussion in the Open-ended Working Group.

I would like to recall, once again, that in the Summit Declaration the Member States resolved to intensify efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. The Reform of the Council has now been discussed over seven years. While there has been some progress and improvements in the working methods of the Security Council, a lot still remains to be accomplished. We need to continue our efforts to attain results and I hope to count on the active participation and willingness by the membership to move forward on this issue. I look forward to a fruitful and constructive discussion.

I would now like to invite comments on the paper before us.