



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

7 June 2017

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform (IGN), H.E. Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and H.E. Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, circulating a further revised version of the "*Food for Thought*" paper, incorporating comments and feedback received from delegations during and since the last meetings in May.

In following closely the discussions during IGN meetings this session, I remain encouraged that delegations continue to engage with each other and with the Co-Chairs in seeking common ground on how to advance the process.

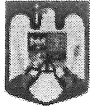
I look forward to your active and constructive participation in the next meetings of the IGN on 12 and 13 June.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

To All Permanent Representatives
to the United Nations
New York



PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

PERMANENT MISSION OF TUNISIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



6 June 2017

Excellency,

Following the meetings of the IGN on 8-9 May 2017, at which Member States discussed the linkages between three issues of the UNSC reform: (i) regional representation, (ii) size of an enlarged Security Council and (iii) categories of membership, we would like to kindly remind member states that the next meetings of the IGN will be held on 12 and 13 June 2017.

The meetings will take place in the mornings of 12 and 13 June and are intended to provide an opportunity for member states to have an in-depth discussion on *"the food for thought"* elements that were discussed during the previous sessions. In this respect, we have herewith attached a revised version of the food for thought elements.

We are grateful for the continued support from delegations and we continue to encourage delegations to maintain consultations with one another, to find ways of bringing positions closer. We remain at your disposal should your delegation wish to engage on any aspects before our next meeting.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

H.E. Dr. Ion Jinga
Permanent Representative of Romania
Co-Chair, IGN 71st Session

H.E. Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari
Permanent Representative of Tunisia
Co-Chair, IGN 71st Session

**The Permanent Missions of the Member States to the United Nations
New York**

**ELEMENTS OF COMMONALITY
AND ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION**
**Food for thought on the question of equitable representation and increase in the
membership of the Security Council and related matters**

IGN GA71 session, 12-13 June 2017

“The World Summit Outcome Document of 2005” adopted by the GA Resolution A/RES/60/1 reaffirmed Member States commitment to strengthen the United Nations with a view to enhancing its authority and efficiency, as well as its capacity to address effectively, and in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. It supports in this context an early reform of the Security Council as an essential element of the overall effort to reform the United Nations to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions.

At its 122nd plenary meeting, on 15 September 2008, the General Assembly adopted the Decision 62/557 on the “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters”, which stipulates *“to commence intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary of the General Assembly during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, but not later than 28 February 2009, based on proposals by Member States, in good faith, with mutual respect and in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council, seeking a solution that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States”*.

Decision 62/557 also mentions that the intergovernmental negotiations on the Security Council reform should refer to five key issues: categories of membership; the question of the veto; regional representation; size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

The intergovernmental negotiations officially started in early 2009, and continued since then in informal plenary of the General Assembly.

During the GA 71st session, the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform (IGN) were *“built on the informal meetings held during its 70th session, as well as the positions of and proposals made by Member States, reflected in the text and its annex circulated on 31 July 2015 and using the elements of convergence circulated on 12 July 2016.”* (GA Decision 70/559 of July 27, 2016).

Following the IGN GA71 meetings of 6-7 February, 7-8 March 2017, 3-4 April 2017 and 8-9 May 2017, the following commonalities and issues for further consideration related to all five key issues have been identified:

I. Commonalities

1. General

- a) The reform of the United Nations Security Council is in the interest of Member States and the United Nations system as a whole.
- b) The reform of the Security Council is a Member States driven process.
- c) The objective of reform is to make the Council more *“broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions”* (as stipulated by “the World Summit Outcome Document”).
- d) Member States consider that reform of the Security Council shall *“ensure a transparent, efficient, effective and accountable functioning of the Council”* (as mentioned in the elements of convergence of 12 July 2016). The principles of democracy and representativeness shall also be taken into consideration.
- e) To improve prospects for early reform, a continued, substantive and enhanced engagement is of utmost importance.
- f) Member States are working together, although expressing different views on substance, in order to move the IGN process forward.
- g) The reform of the Security Council should reflect the reality of the contemporary world.
- h) All five key issues are strongly interconnected and therefore negotiations should be based on the principle: *“nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”*.

2. Relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly

- a) The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly should be mutually reinforcing and complementary, as per the UN Charter. Following discussions during the IGN GA71, the elements of convergence identified by the IGN GA70 under the “Relationship between the Council and the General Assembly” may also be considered commonalities.
- b) The previous deliberations of the AHWG on the revitalization of the work of the GA, including the GA resolution 70/1003 on the revitalization of the GA, and the current debates of the AHWG on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly established by resolution 70/305 of 13 September 2016, might be taken into consideration when updating the progress on this issue.

3. Size of an enlarged Council and working methods of the Council

- a) The reform of the Security Council should lead to an expansion of the Council and therefore certain areas of working methods need to be addressed as a result of expansion.

- b) In line with the elements of convergence identified during the IGN GA70, Member States consider that an enlarged Security Council should consist of a total of members in the mid-20s, within an overall range of 21-27 seats.
- c) Member States acknowledged the linkages to ensuring an increase in membership that would allow for equitable representation, as well as cross-regional balances, while maintaining the effective and operational character of the Council.

4. Categories of membership

Whereas in an enlarged SC, the expansion of the category of 2-year term non-permanent members is in principle accepted by all Member States, however, the Security Council's expansion in other categories (permanent, longer term seats and transitional options) remains to be decided through negotiations by the Member States.

5. The question of veto

Except the fact that the question of veto is a key element of the SC reform, no commonalities have been currently identified in relation to the question of veto.

6. Regional representation

- a) The enlargement of the Council should serve to improve the representation of underrepresented and unrepresented regions and groups.
- b) Ensuring a fair equitable geographical distribution should be reflected in an expanded Council's membership.
- c) The developing countries, particularly African countries should be better represented in the Security Council.
- d) Due attention has also to be paid to the equitable representation of small states, including SIDS and other cross regional groups.

II. Issues for further consideration

The list of issues for further consideration is not an exhaustive one.

1. General

- a) Although many member states express a desire to move to the next phase, a large variety of opinions on the Security Council's reform persist particularly in relation to the following three clusters: categories of membership; the question of the veto; regional representation.
- b) Might contributions of Member States to the maintenance of peace and security be reflected in the duration of their presence in the Council?

2. The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly

In addition to the elements of convergence identified during IGN GA70 session, further ways to enhance the accountability of an enlarged Council to the UN membership and to increase the transparency of the Security Council's work in relation to the General Assembly have to be explored.

3. Size of an enlarged Council

- a) In line with the element of convergence identified during the IGN GA70 referring to *“ensuring the holding of the Presidency of the enlarged Council by non-permanent members (NPM) at least once during their tenure”*, concrete ways for holding the rotating presidency in an enlarged Security Council need to be examined.
- b) When discussing the size of the Security Council, Member States expressed different views on how to ensure a balance between the representativeness and effectiveness of an enlarged Council. Ensuring such a balance is also an element of convergence identified by the IGN GA70.

4. Categories of membership

- a) The UN Charter mentions only two categories (permanent and non-permanent), but the GA decision 62/557 refers to *“categories of membership”* without specifying them, which leaves to the member states to decide if additional categories may be created.
- b) During discussions in IGN GA71 and in previous IGN sessions, Member States expressed preference for one or more of the following options:
 - Enlargement of the SC with both permanent and 2-year term non-permanent members;
 - Enlargement of the SC with 2-year term non-permanent members and create a new category of longer-term seats with possibility of re-election;
 - The “transitional option”.
- c) While bearing in mind the close connections between all five key issues, categories of membership might be discussed in parallel with regional representation, the size of the Security Council and the question of veto.
- d) How to accommodate the options mentioned at II.4.b. in an enlarged Security Council?

5. The question of veto

- a) More in-depth discussions are needed to explore how the veto impacts the work and the effectiveness of an enlarged Security Council.
- b) During discussions in IGN GA71 and in previous IGN sessions, the following options were mentioned:

- If new permanent members are approved:
 - the veto might be expanded to all permanent members; or
 - new permanent members might not benefit from the veto, which will be kept only by the current P5; or
 - the veto might be extended to new permanent members after a reviewing period.
- Progressive restraint / abolition of veto.
- Voluntarily refrain to use the veto in cases of mass atrocities.
- Not altering the current arrangements with respect to the veto.

6. Regional representation

- a) What might be the appropriate ratio between the number of SC members and GA members?
- b) What might be the appropriate ratio between the number of SC non-permanent members and number of countries in regional groups?
- c) Would it be appropriate to examine the ratio between the number of SC non-permanent members and the number of permanent members?
- d) The question of whether a country represents only itself in the SC, or its region, or the whole of UN membership needs further clarifications. UN Charter, Article 24, para 1: *“In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.”*
- e) In an enlarged Security Council, how to reflect the increasing role of regional groups and regional organizations in international relations, particularly in the fields of peace and security?
- f) Further clarification is needed on the role of regional groups in selecting new members.
- g) Further clarification is needed on the concepts of “equitable geographic distribution” and “regional representation”.
- h) More in-depth discussions are needed to clarify if in an enlarged SC cross-regional representation might be based on criteria such as country size, ethnicity and religion, climate vulnerability and development level, as requested by some Member States.
- i) While bearing in mind the close connections between all five clusters, regional representation might be discussed in parallel with the size of the SC and categories of membership.
- j) In seeking a solution that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States for an enlarged Security Council, how to make consistent the principles listed in paragraph I.1.d. with art. 23.1. of the UN Charter which refers to *“the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution”*?