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Permanent Representative

Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters

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Mr. President,

1. I would like to thank you for convening this session of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters (OEWG). We appreciate and welcome your decision to allow the OEWG to carry out consultations on the framework and modalities so that clear rules and procedures can be established prior to starting intergovernmental negotiations. This will help ensure that negotiations are conducted in a spirit of good faith and mutual respect, with structure and efficiency.

Mr. President,

2. At the outset, I think it is worth reminding ourselves of the very reason we are here today. That is, our shared desire to see the Security Council rendered more democratic, inclusive, representative, transparent, efficient, and accountable through reform. We must now work with a renewed sense of urgency while maintaining our principles en route to reform.
3. If we all agree that is indeed our objective, then we must realize that the process leading to that end should also be democratic, inclusive, representative, transparent, efficient, and accountable. Any approach lacking in or suppressing these principles will not only fail to produce the reform we are all

striving for, but will also breed dissension, discord, and fragmentation among the membership. This would only serve to weigh down our efforts and make our collective goal that much harder to achieve.

4. In this regard, I would like to express my support for the proposal on the framework and modalities put forward by the delegation of Spain and Argentina. This document encapsulates several important points that will guide us through a sustainable and successful intergovernmental negotiation process.
5. In line with this proposal, my delegation is committed to reaching an agreement on the framework and modalities that will pave the way for negotiations which ensure ① respect for the sovereign equality of Member States, ② equitable geographical distribution, ③ strengthening of the democratic underpinning of the Council to enhance its accountability to the Membership, ④ solidifying the ownership in reform through the accommodation of interests of all Member States and regional and other groupings, in particular those who have been traditionally under-represented, and ⑤ increase of opportunity for all Member States to serve on the Security Council, particularly groups which have been historically under-represented.
6. To this end, my delegation believes that first of all, negotiations should be an open, inclusive, and transparent process guided by objectivity and impartiality in full trust of the entire membership. Additionally, negotiations should be conducted in good faith and with mutual respect for divergent positions.
7. Second, we believe there is a need for clear rules and procedures to guarantee a fair and level playing field for all. And these should be rules based on the established general practice in the informal plenary of the General Assembly, i.e., i) no record of the meetings, ii) no formal decision is to be taken, iii) no vote. Therefore, we believe that study of the best practices and prior successes of GA informal plenary sessions should be considered.
8. Third, there should be an unequivocal understanding that negotiations will proceed in accordance with the predetermined agreed upon agenda, will full respect given to the sequence or order of items to be negotiated. While we all want to see progress made in the shortest time possible, it should not be at the expense of a thorough, in-depth consideration and discussion. Hence, we propose that no arbitrary time limitations or measures that will curtail the negotiation process and undermine the spirit of consensus be sought by the membership. We must not allow the reform process to be turned into a sprinters race before the starting blocks have been set. In this regard, it should be recalled that ever since the Security Council reform meetings, this has been the understood goal of the Membership. This has been reinforced by a variety of pre-existing General Assembly resolutions and reports,

including the document A/61/47 and resolution 55/30 and decision 61/561. Again, any singular actions to spur premature negotiations will only ferment further fragmentation among Member States.

9. Fourth, bearing in mind that all aspects of Security Council reform are open for negotiation, and noting the complexity of all relevant elements, a package deal approach should be sought. The need for such a comprehensive methodology is obvious – for example, the issue of categories will invariably bring into discussion the issue of size, veto, and regional representation. It would not be feasible to seek agreement on one element without touching upon these other related issues. Any initial agreement on one aspect of the reform through such fragmented and segregated approach will be temporary and fleeting, only to unravel as soon as negotiations begin on other related issues.
10. Fifth, regarding the decision-making mechanism, since the reform of the Security Council will have a grave impact on the entire membership, it should elicit the widest possible political acceptance by Member States, well above the two-third majority. No proposal that leaves a significant portion of the membership alienated and disillusioned will lead to a successful or sustainable reform.

Mr. President,

11. Lastly, I would like to emphasize that the Open-ended Working Group has served us well, and decision 62/557 also envisaged its continued role after the commencement of intergovernmental negotiations. In this context, it should be understood that the Open-ended Working Group could continue to contribute to the negotiation process where warranted. The Republic of Korea is ready this process with a view to work towards a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. We are willing to participate in consultations and negotiations in a flexible way, based on our principled positions and are ready to move forward under a clear understanding of the rules and procedures to ensure a process of intergovernmental negotiations that is democratic, inclusive, representative, transparent, efficient, and accountable.
12. My delegation looks forward to hearing the proposals from other delegations on the framework and modalities during the remaining sessions of the Working Group and reiterates our full support to you, Mr. President, as you lead the OEWG to a fruitful outcome.

Thank you.