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Statement by H.E. Mr. Yukio Takasu
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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
19 January 2008, New York

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for convening the fifth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group. We are grateful to you and Ambassador Tanin for devoting a great amount of time and energy to advance the Security Council reform agenda.

(Objective of Security Council reform)

In the last OEWG meeting on 5 December 2008, I underlined that the objective of Security Council reform was clearly defined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. The objective of reform – to make the Security Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions – was agreed upon by world leaders after intensive negotiations.

We cannot accept attempts to modify or redefine this objective of Security Council reform. I stress that we should refrain from reopening the consensus definition of the objective or prolonging the start of negotiations (with conceptual discussion), or even prejudging the course of substantive negotiations at this stage. Rather, we should concentrate now on beginning substantive negotiations as soon as possible and honor the commitment of all Member States reflected in GA decision 62/557.

(Guiding principles)

GA decision 62/557 includes the consensus guiding principles for intergovernmental negotiations. We cannot accept any proposals to modify those agreements or bring up again these issues that have already been settled through negotiations, prior to the adoption of the decision without a vote at the General Assembly on 15 September 2008.

Having said that, let me touch upon the agenda of today's meeting, which is the "modalities" of intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary of the General Assembly.

Modalities may refer to the decision-making process, how to organize negotiations, or how to conduct negotiations.

(Decision-making process)

With regard to the decision-making process of intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary, there is no question that the general rules of procedure of the GA will apply. If any clarifications on issues of negotiation procedure are required, these will be worked out as part of the negotiating process in the informal plenary, as has been the case with other informal negotiations in the General Assembly. The objective of the negotiations is to seek a solution that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States, as clearly stated in decision 62/557.