

COLOMBIA



COLOMBIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Intervención
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Reunión del Plenario Informal de la Asamblea General sobre la Cuestión de la representación equitativa en el Consejo de Seguridad y del aumento del número de sus miembros y cuestiones conexas

Tema: Relación entre el Consejo de Seguridad y la Asamblea General

63° Período de Sesiones de la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas

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Verificar contra el discurso pronunciado

Statement by
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Permanent Representative of Colombia

Informal Meeting of the Plenary on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Council

Topic: Relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly

63rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 20 April 2009

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Señor Presidente:

Deseo expresarle el aprecio de mi delegación por la convocatoria de esta reunión, con la que concluimos las discusiones temáticas de la primera ronda de negociaciones intergubernamentales sobre la reforma del Consejo de Seguridad. Igualmente, deseo agradecerle la distribución, a fines de la semana pasada, del documento de discusión sobre la relación entre el Consejo de Seguridad y la Asamblea General.

Señor Presidente:

Como lo mencionara mi delegación el pasado martes en la reunión del Grupo de Trabajo sobre revitalización de la Asamblea General, el restablecimiento del equilibrio entre los órganos principales de las Naciones Unidas debe ser una prioridad dentro de los procesos de reforma de la Organización.

La Asamblea General, según lo estipulado en la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, es el único órgano universal de la Organización y principal órgano de deliberación, elaboración de políticas y participación. El mandato de la Asamblea es comprensivo e incluye los asuntos relativos al desarme y al mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad, así como asuntos económicos, sociales, políticos y de cooperación. Asimismo, a la Asamblea le corresponde un papel más activo en la consideración de asuntos relacionados con los derechos humanos y el derecho humanitario.

Desafortunadamente, existe un desbalance significativo en las relaciones entre los órganos principales de la Organización, y en particular entre la Asamblea General y el Consejo de Seguridad. En este sentido, la apropiación de temas de la Asamblea por parte del Consejo es un problema de fondo que merece nuestra completa atención y que debería ser rectificado durante este proceso de reforma.

La comunicación entre el Consejo de Seguridad y la Asamblea es otro elemento que debe mejorar para hacer del Consejo un órgano más transparente. La realización de reuniones periódicas entre los Presidentes de la Asamblea General, el ECOSOC y el Consejo de Seguridad, y la presentación de informes analíticos por parte del Consejo a la Asamblea son algunas medidas para lograr este objetivo. Igualmente, mi delegación considera que la rendición de cuentas del Consejo de Seguridad ante la Asamblea General es la única manera de lograr transparencia en sus acciones y de reforzar el papel de la Asamblea como único órgano universal de deliberación y toma de decisiones dentro de la Organización.

Señor Presidente:

Las negociaciones intergubernamentales que han tenido lugar en el plenario informal de la Asamblea General durante esta primera ronda, nos han brindado una valiosa oportunidad para intercambiar opiniones sobre temas específicos relativos a la reforma del Consejo de Seguridad. Todas las delegaciones han tenido la oportunidad de expresar sus opiniones frente a este importante proceso de reforma. El intercambio de ideas ha sido significativo para entender la visión de los distintos miembros de la Organización sobre este proceso.

Tomando como punto de partida la claridad que existe sobre las diversas posiciones, debemos empezar a mostrar flexibilidad y explorar opciones de compromiso si deseamos verdaderamente reformar el Consejo de Seguridad. Colombia considera que para lograr avances reales en este proceso durante la segunda ronda de negociación, debemos empezar a evaluar propuestas de reforma que acerquen a las delegaciones hacia un modelo que cuente con el más amplio acuerdo político, por encima de las dos terceras partes de la membresía.

En este sentido, Colombia, junto con la delegación de Italia, se permite presentar un modelo de reforma que tiene como fin acercar las diferentes posiciones expresadas en este foro de una manera que nos lleve a un Consejo de Seguridad más democrático, representativo, transparente, efectivo y con mayor rendición de cuentas. Presentamos este documento con un espíritu constructivo y de cooperación, y con el ánimo de hacer una contribución positiva al proceso.

Este documento contiene propuestas concretas de reforma en cinco áreas: categorías, períodos y mandato de nuevas sillas, mayoría requerida en la toma de decisiones del Consejo de Seguridad y el asunto del veto, los métodos de trabajo y los procedimientos del Consejo, la relación entre el Consejo de Seguridad y la Asamblea General, y el mecanismo de revisión de la reforma.

En relación con estas áreas, deseo hacer énfasis en algunos elementos contenidos dentro del documento. Esta propuesta acercaría al Consejo a ser un órgano más representativo regionalmente y brindaría mayores oportunidades de participación a Estados pequeños y medianos. A su vez, el documento propone la creación de sillas de duración extendida para aquellos países que han expresado el deseo de hacer contribuciones a las labores del Consejo más allá de los actuales períodos no renovables de dos años de duración.

Igualmente, el documento contiene propuestas específicas para modificar tanto el proceso de toma de decisiones dentro del Consejo, incluyendo el uso del veto, como sus métodos de trabajo en general, con el fin de aumentar la

transparencia y fortalecer los principios democráticos dentro de ese órgano. Se incluyen también medidas para facilitar la participación de países que no son miembros del Consejo en las actividades de éste y para mejorar la comunicación y la rendición de cuentas ante la Asamblea General.

Señor Presidente:

Antes de terminar, permítame manifestarle que el documento presentado, cuyo texto está siendo circulado junto con esta intervención, no es una posición definitiva de Colombia sino un punto de partida a ser analizado por las distintas delegaciones para buscar un acuerdo sobre este tema. Esperamos, por lo tanto, que sea recibido por las delegaciones con el espíritu de flexibilidad con el que es presentado.

Finalmente, deseo reiterarle una vez más la voluntad de mi país para lograr una reforma del Consejo de Seguridad de la que todos los Estados Miembros de nuestra organización se sientan orgullosos y en la que todos nos veamos representados.

Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to convey to you the appreciation of my delegation for convening this meeting, which concludes the thematic discussions of the first round of intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council. Likewise, I would like to thank you for distributing, at the end of last week, the discussion paper on the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

As mentioned by my delegation last Tuesday during the meeting of the Working Group on revitalization of the General Assembly, the reestablishment of the balance between the main bodies of the United Nations must be a priority within the processes to reform the Organization.

The General Assembly, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, is the only universal body of the Organization and the main body for deliberation, policy-making and participation. The mandate of the Assembly is comprehensive and

includes matters relative to disarmament and the maintenance of peace and security, as well as economic, social, political and cooperation matters. Likewise, the Assembly has a more active role in the consideration of issues relating to human rights and humanitarian law.

Unfortunately, there is a significant imbalance in the relationship between the main bodies of the Organization, and in particular between the Assembly and the Security Council. In this regard, the encroachment by the Security Council of issues under the purview of the General Assembly is a serious problem that deserves our full attention and that should be rectified during this reform process.

The communication between the Security Council and the Assembly is another element that must be improved to make the Council a more transparent organ. The holding of periodic meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the ECOSOC and the Security Council, and the presentation of analytical reports by the Council to the Assembly are some of the measures to achieve this objective. Equally, my delegation considers that the Security Council being accountable to the General Assembly is the only manner of achieving transparency in its actions and reinforces the role of the Assembly as the only universal organ for deliberation and decision-making within the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

This first round of intergovernmental negotiations that have taken place in the informal plenary of the General Assembly have provided us with a valuable opportunity to exchange opinions on specific issues relative to the reform of the Security Council. All delegations have had the opportunity to express their opinions with regard to this important reform process. The exchange of ideas has been significant to understand the vision of the different members of the Organization on this process.

Using the existing clarity on the diverse positions as a starting point, we must begin to show flexibility and explore compromise options if we truly wish to reform the Security Council. Colombia considers that to make real progress in this process during the second round of negotiations, we must begin to evaluate reform proposals that bring delegations closer to a model that has the broadest political agreement possible, beyond the two thirds majority of the membership.

In this regard, Colombia, together with the delegation of Italy, would like to present a model of reform that has as its goal to bring the different positions expressed in this forum closer in a way that will lead us to a more democratic, representative, transparent, effective and accountable Security Council. We present

this document in a constructive spirit of cooperation, and with the hope of making a positive contribution to the process.

This document contains concrete proposals for reform in five areas: categories, terms and mandate of new seats, the majority required for Security Council decisions and the question of the veto, the methods of work and procedures of the Council, the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the review mechanism of the reform.

With regard to these areas, I would like to emphasize some elements contained within the document. This proposal would bring the Council closer to being a more regionally representative body and would create greater opportunities for participation for small and medium States. At the same time, the document proposes the creation of extended duration seats for those countries that have expressed the desire to make contributions to the work of the Council beyond the current two-year, non-renewable terms.

Likewise, the document contains specific proposals for modifying the decision-making process within the Council, including the use of the veto, as well as its working methods in general, in order to increase transparency and strengthen democratic principles within that body. It also includes measures to facilitate the participation of countries that are not members of the Council in its activities and to improve communication and accountability before the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding, allow me to express that the document presented, which is being distributed along with this statement, is not Colombia's definitive position, but rather a starting point to be evaluated by the different delegations in order to reach an agreement on this matter. We, therefore, hope that it will be received by delegations with the same spirit of flexibility with which it is being presented.

Finally, I would like to reiterate once more the willingness of my country to achieve a reform of the Security Council of which all Member States of the Organization can be proud and where all of us can see ourselves represented.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(Attachment)

SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

Since the last amendment of the Charter of the United Nations in 1963, which increased the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council, world realities have continued to change. Adapting the Security Council's structure and working methods to these realities is an urgent priority.

Any reform of the Security Council should have as its objective the establishment of a more democratic, more equitably representative, more transparent, more effective and more accountable Council, one which respects the diversity and pluralism of the contemporary international community. Such a reform would need to pay particular attention to the substantial increase in the number of developing countries within the UN membership since the last expansion of the Security Council, as well as the legitimate interests of small and medium size States to serve on the Council.

The preservation of the democratic principle lies at the heart of the legitimacy of any reform of the Security Council. The discipline of regular elections is irreplaceable in ensuring an accountable, accessible Security Council, one in which membership is earned as a privileged responsibility, not granted as a permanent right. Only an expansion in the number of elected seats can ensure the preservation of that democratic principle, through it the authority of the General Assembly, and ultimately the long term legitimacy of reform.

The subject of Security Council reform is one of the most contentious issues. The review conference envisaged by Article 109 of the Charter of the United Nations never materialized. In the 63 years of its existence, there has been only one successful attempt to change the composition of the Council. The current reform process has been going on for the last 14 years without reaching any agreement. Therefore it is extremely important that the reform of the Security Council must be comprehensive that includes increasing the size of the membership and improving the working methods.

I. CATEGORIES, TERMS and MANDATE

Additional seats

(the exact number of seats will depend on the total size of the expansion and the distribution of those seats to various regions, taking into account the equitable geographical distribution)

Longer term seats

- seats allocated to the regional groups, as follows:

Africa

Asia

Asia/Africa (on rotational basis)

GRULAC

WEOG/EEG (on rotational basis)

Alternative options for duration of terms:

- i) 3 to 5 years without possibility of immediate re-election

or

ii) 2 years with possibility of up to two immediate re-elections. To be eligible to run afresh, Member States will have to give a break equivalent to the consecutive period served on the Council.

Regular non permanent seats

- seats for a two year term without possibility of immediate re-election, as follows:

Small States¹

Medium Size States²

Africa

Asia

GRULAC

EEG

Arrangements for representation on the seats, including re-election and rotation, should be decided by the respective regional groups.

¹ population below 1 million, i.e. 42 countries, of which 37 were never elected to the Security Council. Of the 37 never elected: 4 from Africa; 11 from GRULAC; 15 from ASIA; 1 from EEG; 6 from WEOG

² population between 1 and 10 million; i.e. 71 countries, of which 27 were never elected to the Security Council

II. MAJORITY REQUIRED FOR SECURITY COUNCIL DECISIONS AND THE QUESTION OF THE VETO

- Majority required for adoption of substantive decisions in an enlarged Security Council in accordance with Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations:

present ratio, i.e. 3/5 (60%) of the total SC membership
or a greater ratio

- Options on the question of the veto:
 - abolition of the veto
 - limitations of the scope of the veto, inter alia application of the veto only on Chapter VII matters

III. WORKING METHODS AND PROCEDURES

i) Enhance transparency in the work of the Security Council, including through:

- Better access to information through open briefings
- Holding of Security Council meetings in an open format and keeping to a minimum closed meetings and informal consultations as the exception they were meant to be
- Timely availability to non Council members of draft resolutions and Presidential statements
- Frequent, timely and qualitative briefings for non Council members on the matters discussed in Security Council informal consultations and in the Subsidiary bodies

ii) Enhance access and participation of non members of the Security Council in the work of the Council, including through:

- Full and more vigorous implementation of Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter of the United Nations in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies
- Interaction of the Council with all interested and concerned parties particularly in the decision making process
- Timely decision on the format of meetings to allow the membership enough preparation
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure that views and interests of Member States affected or concerned by any matter on the agenda including troop contributing countries and host countries, are heard and taken into account
- Expansion of consultation and cooperation of the Council with regional organizations and countries in the region concerned

iii) Adoption of formal rules of procedure of the Security Council, after appropriate consultation with the general membership.

iv) Review of the implementation of decisions of the Security Council.

IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Enhance accountability of the Security Council to the general membership
- Submission of substantive and analytical annual reports and, when necessary, of special reports of the Council to the General Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Strengthening the inter-relationship among the Security Council and other UN principal organs, including through regular and institutionalized consultations, cooperation and adequate exchange of information

V. REVIEW MECHANISM

- Review after 10 to 12 years or 15 to 16 years, taking into account the terms for the seats
- comprehensive reassessment, including the composition and working methods of the Council