

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Intervention Notes: 2nd Meeting of the OEWG on SC Reform December 5, 2005

At the outset let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, and for the structured programme of work you have provided in your letter of November 24.

This is exactly the sort of agenda and timeline Canada believes is needed in order for the OEWG's deliberations to bear fruit.

Canada is particularly pleased to start with a dedicated discussion of the "Framework" for intergovernmental negotiations. The term "framework" has been among the murkiest and least-understood terms in the OEWG's recent deliberations, and its meaning is not addressed in Resolution 63//57.

Welcome this opportunity to build clarity and common understanding.

In this regard, let me raise and address two questions:

- First – what do we mean by “framework for intergovernmental negotiations?”
- Second – what does this working group need to do in relation to the issue of framework in order to prepare for February?

On question of definition, let me say that Canada understands “framework for intergovernmental negotiations” to consist of 3 critical and indivisible components, which are largely uncontroversial:

1. **The first component is the venue – or what we could call the INSTITUTIONAL framework for negotiations.** Resolution 63/57 leaves us with a clear directive on this point: the venue is the informal plenary of the General Assembly.
2. **Second is the SUBSTANTIVE framework for negotiations.** On what will our negotiations be based? On this front, let me say that Canada agrees with India and others who have argued that negotiations can only be based on the positions and proposals of member states.
3. **Third, is the POLITICAL framework for negotiations.** Specifically, what objectives and principles will inform our work? This, Mr. President, is where the membership parts company. Some in this room will argue that no guiding principles or agreed objectives are required. Canada disagrees. We continue to believe that a negotiation of this magnitude, the result of which has real implications for the international peace and security architecture, should be based on an agreed objective and agreed principles.

Mr. President, Canada acknowledges that, as one of the delegations making the case for agreed principles, the onus is on us to be specific about what we mean when we refer to objectives and guiding principles.

For Canada, the objective of this exercise has always been to make the Council more representative, more effective, and more accountable. We strongly disagree with some delegations on what formula best serves this objective, but the objective itself I believe is widely agreed.

In our view the principles which should guide these negotiations are the same principles which guide all major UN negotiations – and certainly those relating to membership in UN bodies -- namely:

- respect for sovereign equality of all states (big or small),
- equitable geographic distribution
- the principle of accountability
- and fair accommodation of all groups' interests

In our view, these straightforward principles, would not unduly shackle the membership or the forthcoming negotiations. On the contrary -- they are in fact so fundamental and such a part of how the UN membership does business that it is difficult to see why we would part from them for the purpose of the SC expansion discussions. If such a reason exists, we are open to hearing it. But otherwise we take the view that these few basic principles should apply to the intergovernmental negotiations starting in February.

Mr. President, on my second question, namely -- what the OEWG has to do on the question of framework to prepare for February, the answer is simple: articulate it -- in writing.

In this regard, welcome the non-paper presented today by Spain and Argentina...let me say unambiguously that its provisions also reflect Canadian views and that we fully associate ourselves with it.

Finally Mr. President, allow me to depart slightly from today's theme to say that Canada concurs with Spain and others who have argued that framework and modalities cannot be meaningfully separated. While we have reserved our remarks on modalities until the next meeting as proposed in your schedule, it is important that both be covered, together, in the final product of these deliberations.

For this reason we again welcome the non-paper presented by Spain, which quite rightly covers elements of relevance to discussions on both framework and modalities.

Thank you.