



PERMANENT MISSION OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**Statement by Mr. Fazlı Çorman,
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**at the informal plenary of the
General Assembly on the occasion of
the commencement of the
Intergovernmental Negotiations on
UN Security Council Reform**

(New York, 19 February 2009)

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to you for convening this meeting. We pay tribute to your efforts that have culminated today in the commencement of the intergovernmental negotiations. This new phase represents an important milestone in the long and painstaking process of Security Council reform.

We also thank you for preparing a work plan for the intergovernmental negotiations and making it available to the delegations prior to this meeting. We are pleased to have started a fruitful discussion today on this document.

Mr. Chairman,

We have gathered here with a common purpose; that is, to realize the much needed reform of the Security Council, and thereby turn the Council into a more democratic, more broadly representative, more accountable and hence more effective body. The task ahead of us is not simple. Serious divergences remain among the member states on both substantive and procedural aspects of the negotiation. However, this should not lead us to pessimism. Indeed, the most recent meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group have demonstrated the overwhelming support of the membership for the Council reform. Now is the time to capitalize on this common and unwavering sense of purpose.

Mr. Chairman,

Negotiation, by definition, is a dialogue intended to resolve disputes, to produce agreement upon a course of action or to craft outcomes to satisfy various interests. It is therefore our sincere expectation that the intergovernmental negotiations that we embark upon today will live up to this definition. In particular, we look forward to having real negotiations on each of the five categories contained in operative paragraph (e) of UN General Assembly decision 62/557. The primary purpose of the negotiations should be to reconcile the divergent views and interests with a view to achieving a solution that can garner the widest political acceptance by Member States, as called for in decision 557. In view of the persistent differences among the membership on various issues, some of these categories, good faith and compromise seem indispensable for the successful completion of the negotiations. In this context, the ownership of all the Member States throughout the reform process is of crucial importance. This is in compliance with decision 557, according to which the intergovernmental negotiations will be conducted on the basis of the positions and proposals of Member States, regional groups and other groupings of Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

With your indulgence, I would now like to very briefly summarize where Turkey stands on each of these five categories.

On the question of categories of membership, Turkey believes that enlargement of the Council in the non-permanent category would render the Council more democratic and more broadly representative. In democracies, privileges are gained through elections for a specific timeframe, not granted as permanent rights to be extended infinitely. The

expansion of the Council in the non-permanent category will also allow a greater number of member states to be represented at the Council.

As regards regional representation, it is the long-standing position of Turkey that the enlarged Council will have to observe an equitable geographic representation. This means that no particular region or group of countries should be discriminated either in favour or against. For example, we believe that the continent of Africa is not sufficiently represented at the Council at present. Such imbalances need to be remedied during the reform process.

On the question of the size of the enlarged Council, Turkey does not hold a fixed predisposition. Having said that, we would like to emphasize that the Council should be sufficiently large as to represent different groups and geographies in an equitable way, including historically under-represented members, such as small- and medium-sized states and landlocked countries.

As for the working methods of the Council, we believe that reform should also include the adaptation of the working methods and procedures of the Council to today's realities. In particular, we need to find ways to further enhance transparency in the work of the Council.

As regards the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, Turkey supports the strengthening of the interrelationship among the Council and other UN organs and enhanced accountability of the Council to the general membership.

Finally, we believe that the reform process should also address the question of veto. As an initial measure, various ways could be found for the limitation of the scope of the veto. This could, for example, be in the form of limiting the use of veto to Chapter VII matters.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an important complexity surrounding the reform process, particularly in relation to the five key issues I have just outlined. This relates to the fact that some of these issues are closely interlinked with each other. To illustrate, categories of membership intricately related to size of the Council. Likewise, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to discuss the size of the Council without simultaneously considering the question of regional representation.

That is the main reason why Turkey has advocated a comprehensive solution whereby all these interrelated aspects of the Council reform would be tackled in conjunction and connection with each other. We remain steadfast in our belief that this is still the best way to move forward.

Mr. Chairman,

We do not see the Council reform as a zero-sum game in which one member or group gains at the expense of the others. After all, the Security Council is the main organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is therefore in our common interest that we strive to achieve a broadest possible support for the Council reform. Only then will this important organ be able to enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy in an increasingly complex world.

Thank you.