



Permanent Mission of Germany
to the United Nations

Statement

of

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Debate of the General Assembly on Security Council reform

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(check against delivery)

Mr President,

This is the first time for me as Permanent Representative of Germany to the UN to address the General Assembly, and I am grateful for this occasion to participate in a discussion on one of the central elements of UN reform.

Mr President,

In the last few weeks, we have seen progress on a number of important reform issues: We have inaugurated the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. We are working intensively on mandate review and creating system-wide coherence. On management reform and budget reform, huge efforts are being made to come to an agreement.

All this is good and commendable. And yet – the more progress we make in these fields, the more the one big reform issue we haven't touched yet sticks out like a sore thumb.

UN reform without Security Council reform not only will not be complete: It will not work. The reason for this is not that the Security Council is more important or on a higher level of hierarchy than other UN bodies. The reason is that the work of the Security Council is interlinked with and affects the work of the whole UN. It is therefore with good reason that the Summit last September called for, I quote, early reform of the Security Council.

Mr President,

We all know in our hearts: General Assembly revitalization and reform of the working methods of the Security Council will not work without a reformed Security Council. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding will become the more effective the more legitimate the decisions of the Security Council are seen to be. The outside world to a very large extent identifies the UN with its most visible organ, the Security Council. A United Nations that claims to have reformed itself without having brought the Security Council into the 21st century will continue to lose authority and credibility in the world.

We have been discussing Security Council reform now for over fifteen years. Whatever the differences of opinion may be, there is overwhelming agreement that this reform is necessary and that we need a decision soon. The UN membership is also in agreement that reform of the working methods of the Council is not enough and that we need structural reform.

My colleagues in this hall remember better than a newcomer like me the numerous attempts at reform of the working methods of the Council. Very good suggestions have been made, in the context of the Open Ended Working Group and elsewhere, and on a number of recommendations broad agreement has already been reached. But we all know that these initiatives have not been implemented in a satisfactory manner so far. The so-called S 5 proposal on the working methods of the council has the great merit of concentrating the most pertinent proposals and of creating a coherent approach to this part of reform. To a very large extent the S 5 suggestions are

also included in the G 4 proposal. But while there is compatibility on substance we have doubts on procedure: will the S 5 proposals be effectively implemented if we do not achieve structural reform?

Mr President,

British Prime Minister Tony Blair recently said in a speech that the Security Council in its present form is not legitimate any more. It is also not as effective as it could be. To be legitimate and effective, the Security Council must:

- represent the political realities of the 21st century**
- let major stakeholders, on which implementation of SC decisions depends, participate in its decision-making**
- give the southern hemisphere an adequate say in Security Council matters**
- commit to a meaningful reform of its working methods**

All this can only be achieved by a structural reform of the Council, by enlargement in both the category of permanent and non-permanent members. In the 59th and 60th General Assembly, we have seen that this conviction is shared by a large majority of UN members. Indeed, the proposals now on the table of the General Assembly are all compatible in that sense. On the other hand, the ideas presented by the Uniting for Consensus Group in the last General Assembly have not been retabled. A general agreement to enlarge only the non permanent category is not in sight, let alone a consensus as the name of the group implies. Let us now put the missing pieces of UN reform into place and together find a way to

make this reform reality. While we should all be forward-looking and not dwell on differences of the past we need to recognize the results of intense interaction and debates of the last years. On this basis and with open mindedness on all sides, reform can be achieved.

Mr. President,

The issue is now to move on the proposals. Together with our partners in the G4 and all those who have been supportive of SC reform in all regional groups, including Africa, we will continue to work to finally transform the fifteen year discussion of Security Council reform into a respective decision for action. As we have said before, we remain open to further discuss our reform proposal with all Member States genuinely interested in reform and to consider possible amendments with a view to broadening the basis of support.