



# General Assembly

Seventy-third session

**92<sup>nd</sup>** plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 25 June 2019, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Ms. Espinosa Garcés. . . . . (Ecuador)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

## Agenda item 124 (continued)

### Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council

**The President:** Members will recall that, pursuant to decision 72/557, of 29 June 2018, the General Assembly continued intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary meetings during the current session.

The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council remains one of the most important, complex and sensitive processes before the General Assembly. I would like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Ambassador Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for their tireless work as co-Chairs of the process. I extend my sincere gratitude to the two of them, but in particular, if members allow me, on a personal note, to Mrs. Nusseibeh, who is here with us today although she is to deliver a baby this week. That really shows her commitment and interest in the process. I also wish to express my profound gratitude to Member States for their keen interest throughout the process, stimulating discussions and the constructive engagement that has brought us here today.

This year's intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform were as rich and thought-

provoking as they were challenging and, at times, divisive. In that context, I am deeply grateful to Member States for their goodwill and spirit of compromise. I appreciate the support given to the central role of the General Assembly in the matter and to my efforts and those of my team, as President of the General Assembly, as I worked with members to advance the mandate on Security Council reform. My responsibility was to help create the necessary conditions for members' negotiations, but they were in the driver's seat, of course.

I firmly believe in the power of dialogue and diplomacy. I therefore conducted extensive and inclusive consultations with Member States to try to build consensus and make meaningful progress. The draft rollover decision reflects that approach, while taking into account the main issues expressed during this session's intergovernmental negotiations and the progress made. Indeed, as the co-Chairs stated in their letter of 7 June, this year's outcome document is

“a continuation of the outcome documents of the intergovernmental negotiations produced during the seventieth, seventy-first and seventy-second of the General Assembly”.

I therefore propose that the General Assembly decide to continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform at its seventy-fourth session, thereby building on the informal meetings held during its seventy-third session and on the revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration circulated on 7 June, as well as the positions of, and

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proposals made by, Member States reflected in the text and its annex, circulated on 31 July 2015.

We have come a long way. If we are to continue to make further progress and reach agreements for the reform of an essential organ of the United Nations and for the multilateral system, we must continue to collectively build trust among ourselves. That also requires faith in an inclusive, credible and transparent process.

Allow me to add a personal note. I was the Permanent Representative of Ecuador during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. I remember very well how hopeful we were when we decided to commence intergovernmental negotiations during the sixty-third session. Eleven years later, as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, I am constantly asked by many people outside these walls about that very process. There is a great deal of curiosity and high expectations.

As we seek to respond to those expectations, let me say what an honour it has been to have accompanied members to this point in the process. The rest is in the hands of the members of the General Assembly. I encourage members to build upon the work of this session and explore ways to move the process towards the much-needed reform of the Security Council.

In a letter dated 24 June, I circulated a draft oral decision on this issue. May I take it that the Assembly, first, decides to reaffirm the central role of the General Assembly concerning the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council; secondly, also decides to immediately continue intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, as mandated by Assembly decisions 62/557, of 15 September 2008, 63/565 B, of 14 September 2009, 64/568, of 13 September 2010; 65/554, of 12 September 2011, 66/566, of 13 September 2012, 67/561, of 29 August 2013, 68/557, of 8 September 2014, 69/560, of 14 September 2015, 70/559, of 27 July 2016, 71/553, of 19 July 2017, and 72/557, of 29 June 2018, building on the informal meetings held during its seventy-third session and on the revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, circulated on 7 June 2019, as well as the positions of and proposals made by Member States, reflected in the text and its annex circulated on 31 July 2015, to help inform its future work; thirdly, welcomes the

active engagement initiatives and intensive efforts of the President of the General Assembly and notes with appreciation the active role and concrete efforts of the co-Chairs undertaken in a consultative manner with a view to an early comprehensive reform of the Security Council; fourthly, decides to convene 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 during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, if Member States so decide; and, fifthly, decides to include in the agenda of the seventh-fourth session of the General Assembly the item entitled “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council”?

*The draft oral decision was adopted (decision 73/554).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of position, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mrs. Sulimani (Sierra Leone):** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the African Union.

We applaud your exemplary leadership of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, Madam President, and appreciate your commitment and dedicated efforts towards the reform of the Security Council. Africa remains steadfastly committed to a comprehensive and meaningful reform of the Security Council. In that regard, we acknowledge and commend the efforts by the co-Chairs, Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg and Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates, for providing us with revised paper on elements of commonality and issues for further consideration.

We equally commend with deep appreciation the efforts of all Member States for our collective commitment to an inclusive and transparent process leading to a rollover decision adopted by consensus (decision 73/554). The African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government joined that consensus in the spirit of preserving unity and mutual trust among the membership and moving forward the reform of the Security Council, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well

as the intendment of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the principles outlined in decision 62/557.

We take note of the co-Chairs' laudable and commendable effort to reflect the Common African Position in the paper on revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration. In particular, we note that the extension of the veto is now categorical, as opposed to being conditional, and the abolition of the veto is now a stand-alone position. In addition, the position on extending the veto to new permanent members, if it is maintained, has been better reflected. Furthermore, an attempt has been made in the commonality section to reflect the African demand as a priority. However, the reference is vague and not precise in acknowledging representation in the permanent category.

Going forward, we should continue to work towards building on those gains during the seventy-fourth session. We hope that the broad support garnered in favour of the Common African Position, including the support for Africa to be allocated seats in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of the Security Council, will be underscored at the end of the next session of the intergovernmental negotiations.

The African Group is pleased that the positions of, and proposals submitted by, Member States, as reflected in the framework document and its annex circulated by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, and the revised elements of commonalities and issues for further consideration will be rolled over to the seventy-fourth session. We remain committed to a comprehensive reform of the Security Council on the basis of all five clusters outlined in decision 62/557. We will continue to engage in the intergovernmental negotiations process in good faith and with mutual trust. We hope that the documents rolled over to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session will be built upon in a transparent manner through a membership-driven process.

Let me conclude by thanking all Member States that have continued to unequivocally support the Common African Position, espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We look forward to working with all Member States to collectively and cooperatively build on the gains made in favour of the Common African Position. We hope that Member States, especially countries friendly to Africa, will join

in support of redressing the historical injustice done to the African continent and its people.

We also deeply appreciate the acknowledgement by Member States of the African demand that two permanent and two additional non-permanent seats be allotted to Africa as a special case that ought to be redressed. We urge everyone to join us in operationalizing our just call for action to be equitably represented in the Security Council, in line with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

**Mr. Vieira (Brazil):** At the outset, let me thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting and for introducing the rollover decision 73/554, regarding Security Council reform.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Four — Germany, India, Japan and my own country, Brazil.

Today we have decided on the future course of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. It is equally important to take stock of our recent work so as to better plan the steps ahead. The Group of Four appreciates your work during this session, Madam President. We note that this year's rollover decision is different from those adopted in all the previous years and includes only two documents: this year's revised paper and the framework document.

While the end result of the current session was far from satisfactory and not even close to what we hoped for at the outset, the change in the rollover reflects the need for change in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We have also noted the separation of paragraphs 2 and 3, which has been made perhaps for the first time. In our view, it further highlights the role of the President of the General Assembly in this process, and we hope that the incoming President will lead this process towards meaningful progress at the seventy-fourth session.

The conduct of the work of intergovernmental negotiations at this session was perhaps symptomatic of all that is wrong with this process. The outcome document was presented late in the process, and Member States had only one round of discussions to consider it. The Group of Four's position was stated from the very first meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations in 2019. We expected to have a document much earlier so as to hold more focused and results-oriented discussions. Since that did not happen, the least

we could ask for was additional meetings. Regrettably, none of those requests were heeded.

It is simple logic — if the intergovernmental negotiations are in fact a Member States-driven process, those same Member States should be afforded the opportunity to debate and convey their views on the document presented by the co-Chairs.

With regard to the substance, the Group of Four's proposals for the outcome document were also laid out from the first round of discussions. We requested, among other things, a better reflection of the African position; the inclusion of a reference to resolution 53/30, which is one of the legal bases of our work; a recognition of the fact that a majority of Member States want the start of text-based negotiations; and an attribution of positions. In spite of our efforts and openness to debate, those proposals were not duly incorporated in the final outcome by the co-Chairs.

On the other hand, proposals that were hardly discussed were included in the document. Even proposals that were not clearly supported by any Member State are mentioned therein. Actually, the final version regressed compared to the first draft, but there were simply no opportunities to discuss and try to correct those flaws.

We have engaged in discussions within the intergovernmental negotiations for 10 years now and have not witnessed any tangible progress. The very frustrating developments seen in this session make it even more difficult for the Group of Four to accept business as usual. The intergovernmental negotiations started one decade ago and they have yet fulfil their goal of kick-starting real negotiations.

As the United Nations approaches its seventy-fifth anniversary, we must urgently move towards a different type of process with a renewed sense of urgency. With that in mind, we have agreed to go along with the proposal on rolling over the intergovernmental negotiations for one more year with only two documents to guide our work: the framework of 2015 and this year's outcome. We do so reluctantly with a view to being able to build on our past work and in the hope that we will see a more focused process at the next session of the General Assembly. Please allow me also to outline the Group of Four's views on how the future process could be improved.

First, the intergovernmental negotiations meetings should start earlier and take place in an open and transparent manner. There is no reasonable explanation for launching our rounds of discussion only in January and for concluding the sessions in May. If there are still divergences among Member States, it is beyond our understanding why we should work less. On the contrary, we must work more and more efficiently.

Secondly, we expect an early appointment of co-Chairs so that the organization of future meetings can happen as soon as possible. The co-Chairs would also have more time to carry out ample consultations and to plan how to revitalize the process.

Thirdly, the discussions should be more focused and results-oriented. If our aim is to bridge our differences, there is no point in holding general debates, as has been done over the past 10 years. The preliminary work has been exhausted. We now need real negotiations, real give-and-take, in order to reach a workable text that can move us ahead in the process. Instead of repeating ourselves, let us sit down and discuss concrete proposals. Fourthly, it is high time to have a more open and transparent process. The intergovernmental negotiations are very far from being a normal process within the General Assembly. There are no official records. Our sessions are not available on webcast. The institutional memory is flawed or non-existent. The outcome documents, owing to the lack of attribution, do not allow us to identify the origins of proposals or their level of support. Civil society is also kept from obtaining basic information on the debates. For those reasons, at the next session we should make strides towards a more transparent process and discuss ways to make the intergovernmental negotiations a more formal process in the General Assembly. We can look at other processes, such as the General Assembly revitalization process, as a template.

When the intergovernmental negotiations were established in 2009, their purpose, as intended by Member States, was to move from discussions to negotiations with a view to achieving the early reform of the Security Council. After 10 years, we still have not lived up to that expectation. Based on the outcome of the seventy-third session, we hope to change this state of affairs at the session during which we are going to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. If we do not change our way of working and break away from the endless cycle of repetition, the feeling of frustration among a wide number of Member



States will persist, harming the very legitimacy of the process.

Being an unusual process within the General Assembly, the intergovernmental negotiations do not seem to be today tailored to work and perhaps are increasingly becoming a vehicle for the status quo. There is even a *de facto* veto exercised by some, which acts against progress. The fact is that we are not going to move one inch closer to a concrete result if we do not start to negotiate. Any acceptable model of reform will emerge not from abstract discussions and the repetition of positions, but from a real process of negotiation, as per the normal practice in the General Assembly.

After 75 years, we cannot envisage a Security Council that continues without representation for Africa in the permanent category, without the presence of important actors or an adequate representation of different regions. As the late Secretary-General Kofi Annan said almost 15 years ago, Member States should strive to make the Security Council more broadly representative of the international community as a whole, as well as of the geopolitical realities of today. Simply put, our challenge at the coming session is to get closer to that long-overdue goal.

**Ms. King** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the L.69 group, a diverse, pro-reform group of developing countries in favour of justice, sovereignty and equity in the reform of the Security Council both in process and in outcome.

I thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting, the second plenary meeting held on this issue during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. We appreciate your openness and sincerity in conducting the negotiations on the rollover decision (decision 73/554). In particular, we welcome your efforts to streamline the process by ensuring that we will commence the next phase of the reform process during the seventy-fourth session on the basis of the two documents that most adequately reflect the comprehensive positions and proposals of Member States and that capture the current stage of our deliberations. I would also like to thank the co-Chairs, the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for their tireless efforts during this session.

This year, we held five closed informal meetings on Security Council reform, at which Member States reiterated their well-known positions. The L.69 renews

its call for the submission of a text for negotiations. That would normalize the process by bringing it into conformity with all other negotiating processes undertaken by this important organ. We hold firm to the view that we will fulfil our mandate to reform the Security Council only when we are able to negotiate in an open, transparent and mutually respectful manner on the basis of a comprehensive operational text.

The L.69 is grateful to the co-Chairs for their work on revising the elements paper. At the same time, we regret that our positions and those of others have not been adequately reflected. The rigid procedural modalities that characterize the intergovernmental negotiations retard the ability of Member States to engage in dynamic negotiation. Moreover, the failure to identify the proponents of various positions and proposals represented in the co-Chairs' paper compounds the difficulty Member States experience in negotiating the five key issues.

We need to recommit to the transparency that Member States unanimously agreed to in decision 62/557. However, that will not be achieved if we do not properly reflect and attribute the positions and proposals of all Member States in the paper. While we appreciated the efforts of the co-Chairs to review the draft paper, we regret that the final version was concluded overnight and did not properly reflect what was said in the room. In fact, there were some elements included in the revised elements paper that were not even raised during the deliberations.

Although the Common African Position, as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, is not adequately and accurately reflected in the revised paper, we nevertheless welcome the relative strengthening of the way in which that position is represented. This is particularly so as it is supported by an overwhelming majority of Member States, including the L.69.

The L.69 also supports the Caribbean Community's proposal for a rotating seat for small island developing States across all regions that contain those States. We strongly support the rollover of the framework document prepared during the sixty-ninth session, which 124 Member States endorsed, and its annex, containing letters from a further 28 Member States.

The rollover decision, importantly, carries forward the work done in the intergovernmental negotiations into the seventy-fourth session. So, even though we

have our reservations about the revised paper, we remain committed to continuing our engagement with this process, based on the understanding reflected in the rollover decision that we will be working to revise and fine-tune a single document going forward. That said, we recognize the framework document as the most adequate, accurate and comprehensive reflection of Member States' positions to date. Indeed, the rollover of the framework document and current document is something that the L.69 has consistently called for since the seventieth session.

Going forward, our aim is to make progress at the seventy-fourth session and to get into real give-and-take negotiations by the seventy-fifth session, on the basis of the outcome from the seventy-fourth session. We also look forward to the process starting earlier.

To say that the reform of the Security Council is pressing would be an understatement. It has been four decades since the issue of Security Council reform was first placed on the agenda of the General Assembly. Member States have engaged in more than 25 years of discussions on this topic, and we have utilized the intergovernmental negotiations format for over 11 years. There is an acute need for reform and rebirth of the Security Council, all the more so as it approaches its seventy-fifth year. So, let us seize the opportunity of the seventy-fifth anniversary of our United Nations to achieve this long-overdue and much-needed reform.

All over the globe, people are increasingly concerned that multilateralism is not keeping pace in this rapidly changing world. As we reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism, we must recognize that comprehensive reform of the Security Council is essential to strengthening our multilateral system. The peoples of the world are watching us. For its part, the L.69 remains committed to achieving that reform and to restoring faith in our multilateral system.

**Mrs. Zappia** (Italy): On behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group, I wish to thank you, Madam President, for your leadership during the seventy-third session and for your words today.

We welcome the decision to continue intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and we believe that the final version of the revised elements reflects much of the progress achieved, including the strengthened language on working methods, the interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and support for the

increased representation in the Council of developing countries, Africa, small island developing States and small States.

In that regard, let me commend the work of the co-Chairs, Ambassadors Nusseibeh and Braun. I wish to thank Ambassador Nusseibeh, in particular, for her presence today. For me, this is the most meaningful testimony to her generosity and engagement in the process. Throughout this year's session, the co-Chairs made intensive, laudable efforts, listening to the views of all Member States, building on the work done in previous years and finding new convergences. Notwithstanding the persistence of major differences, they managed to meaningfully expand the commonalities section in the revised elements. That achievement confirms that the intergovernmental negotiations are working and, what is more important, delivering results, including through the commendable engagement of all Member States.

There are important points for which the Uniting for Consensus group still has a different reading, in particular the democratic principle, and we will continue to stress them as a fundamental element of Security Council reform. Moreover, we continue to maintain reservations with regard to the 2015 framework document.

The divergent positions among Member States and negotiating groups on key aspects of Security Council reform, such as the veto and the categories of membership, can be overcome only if we reach an overall agreement on the principles underpinning the reform itself. We can continue working on those issues in the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations. We regret that the working methods of the intergovernmental negotiations have once again been called into question today. That is not fair to the efforts that the co-Chairs, Member States and other groups have made to foster dialogue and consensus. As repeated many times, the problem of the intergovernmental negotiations is not the procedure but the substance. No drafting or discussion of texts can fix what currently divides the membership.

The Uniting for Consensus group firmly believes that the Security Council needs to become truly representative, accountable, democratic, transparent and effective. We need such a Council to foster the trust of public opinion in this institution and strengthen multilateralism. Our common goal must be to increase the Council's legitimacy in the eyes of both the general membership and international public opinion. This

would enhance the Council's authority and ultimately its effectiveness, making the United Nations more fit to face new global realities. We are convinced that, if the necessary political will and flexibility is there, the membership can make progress towards the consensual and sustainable reform for which we have been striving. We are looking forward to engaging in future negotiations in good faith, with the sincere conviction that Security Council reform is needed and remains possible.

**Mr. Ten-Pow** (Guyana): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), following the adoption of the decision to roll over consideration of the item on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council to the seventy-fourth session (decision 73/554).

As we conclude this session's intergovernmental negotiations, CARICOM wishes first of all to express its deep appreciation to you, Madam President, for your commitment to Security Council reform and for your active engagement in the process. Throughout the year, Madam, you kept your door open for consultations with all stakeholders. CARICOM — a community of small island and low-lying coastal developing States that attach the greatest importance to strengthening the rule of law in international relations and by extension the organs, such as the Security Council, that underpin the rule-of-law architecture — commends you for the leadership you have shown on this important question of Council reform.

CARICOM also wishes to thank the two Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-third session, Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg. We wish to place on record our deep appreciation for the active role they played and the concrete efforts they made, always in a consultative and transparent manner, with a view to securing an early and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

CARICOM notes with satisfaction that, going forward, the intergovernmental negotiations will build on the series of informal meetings held during the Assembly's seventy-third session and on the paper entitled "Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration", circulated on 7 June, as well as on the various positions of and proposals made

by Member States, reflected in the text and its annex circulated on 31 July 2015. As we look to continue our consideration of this important item at the next session of the intergovernmental negotiations, we hope that Member States will consolidate their commitment to early reform so that greater progress can be achieved at that session through a demonstration of necessary political will and flexibility.

In closing, Madam President, let me once again reiterate our appreciation to you and to the Chairs appointed by you for your intensive and inclusive efforts aimed at bringing about progress in the work of the intergovernmental negotiations in this session, and we look forward to resuming our work on this question during the seventy-fourth session, which we all agree is of the utmost importance.

**Mr. Almunayekh** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Madam President, it is a pleasure for me to express our sincere appreciation to you on behalf of the Arab Group and our support for your wise leadership of the negotiations process at the current session, as well as your desire to make progress towards a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

With regard to the letters of 14 and 24 June, on the oral decision before us today to roll over the intergovernmental negotiations on reform of the Security Council and related matters onto the agenda of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly (decision 73/554), I would like first to express our appreciation for the efforts deployed by the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, who co-chaired the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session. Their work was transparent and open to all stakeholders, and they showed a high degree of professionalism in dealing with critical matters throughout the negotiating process.

The Arab Group believes that these intergovernmental negotiations on the expansion and reform of the Security Council is a very difficult process, attempting as it does to reach commonalities among countries and groups of countries whose positions and proposals display differences and variations. This requires a full commitment to transparency and the principle of compromise during those negotiations.

The position of the Arab Group reflects its attachment to the fact that these intergovernmental negotiations are the only forum that could lead to an agreement on expanding and reforming the Security Council, in accordance with decision 62/557, which calls, *inter alia*, for reaching a solution that is politically as broad as possible to Member States, and in accordance with all the documents agreed upon from previous sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations, including decision 72/557.

The Arab Group stresses the importance of guaranteeing a smooth transition through the oral decision before us today so as to allow Member States to continue their work in a collective manner at the next session and to reach a mutual understanding that will ensure the necessary grounds for a consensual solution leading to a real and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

**Mr. Fesko (Ukraine):** I thank you, Madam President, for convening today's meeting to consider a decision to roll over work on the issue of Security Council reform to the next session of the General Assembly (decision 73/554). At previous sessions of the General Assembly, Ukraine always supported the consensus approach to adopting such decisions, and it remains our position this year as well.

At the same time, we would like to clarify that the mention in the text of the rollover decision of the document entitled "Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration", circulated on 7 June 2019, should not be interpreted as a consensus endorsement of that document by all Member States. First and foremost, we proceed from the understanding that consensus documents reflect positions of all Member States. As we stated during the fifth informal meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, we deeply regret that only a handful of proposals and suggestions made by the States Members of the United Nations during the current and previous sessions were incorporated into the final revised document.

The criteria for taking on board some suggestions while overlooking others remain utterly unclear for us. In this regard, I would like to repeat that in the light of the fact that, with just one seat for 22 States, the Eastern European Group remains one of the least represented among non-permanent members of the Council. We believe that an additional non-permanent

seat for the Eastern European Group is an absolutely fair and just arrangement. Moreover, we have yet to hear an objection from anyone to giving the Eastern European Group one additional non-permanent seat. In fact, all proposed models of Council reform foresee that my region be given that additional seat. It should therefore be treated as a commonality.

It is also well known that on numerous occasions my delegation has raised the issue that it is absolutely untenable that a permanent member has the privilege to exercise the veto right during consideration of situations in which that member is directly involved as a party to a conflict. Together with our Georgian colleagues, we brought to the attention of the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations the importance of considering in the course of the negotiations the issue of limiting the ability of a party to a conflict to exercise its right of veto in relevant situations. In our opinion, it should constitute an integral part of Security Council reform. Unfortunately, that information is not to be found in the co-Chairs' document. In the light of that, we do not consider the circulated revised elements as being representative of all the views and opinions expressed during the negotiations.

As for the way forward, we believe it is absolutely crucial to reconsider the existing practices for organizing and conducting the intergovernmental negotiations, and the next session would be a very good opportunity to do that, in the light of the approaching seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

**Mr. Ma Zhaoxu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*):** The Chinese delegation welcomes the action taken by the General Assembly just now to adopt by consensus a brief technical oral decision 73/554 to roll over the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform to the next session of the General Assembly. Under your stewardship, Madam President, five intergovernmental negotiation meetings were successfully held during the current session of the General Assembly. The co-Chairs, Ambassadors Nusseibeh and Braun, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, were guided by the mandate of decision 62/557 and committed to the principle that the intergovernmental negotiations is a process driven by Member States. They maintained an objective and impartial position, held extensive consultations with the broad membership and facilitated in-depth discussions on the five clusters of issues pertaining to Security Council reform. They



have been instrumental in enhancing communication and building mutual trust and greater consensus among the parties. The Chinese delegation greatly appreciates the positive role of the President and the co-Chairs and the outstanding contributions they have made.

Thanks to the collegial efforts of the parties, this session of the intergovernmental negotiations has made progress. In the course of extensive and in-depth discussions, Member States clarified and campaigned for their respective positions, engaged with one another in interactive dialogue and established with greater clarity that the reform should give priority to increased representation and a greater voice for developing countries, especially African countries, in the Council, and to creating greater opportunities for small and medium-sized countries to be involved in the Council's work of the Council.

On other issues, including the relationship between the allocation of regional seats and greater regional representation, how to realize the principle of equitable geographic distribution, the working methods of the Council, and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, a number of constructive proposals were made, contributing to enhanced mutual understanding and trust.

Decision 62/557 states explicitly that the intergovernmental negotiations are the main forum for advancing Council reform and are to be driven by Member States and based on positions and proposals from all Member States. The document circulated by the co-Chairs containing revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration is the co-Chairs' personal working document. It is not a document of Member States, nor is it a basis for intergovernmental negotiations, much less a negotiating text.

As things stand now, enormous differences remain about matters of principle concerning the general direction and approach of Council reform. To date, no proposed reform approach or concrete solution has garnered wide support from Member States. That is the reality facing us, and face it we must. If we were to disregard it and artificially expedite the process, set a time limit and rush into text-based negotiations, it would only exacerbate the polarization and confrontation and undermine the efforts made over the years, forfeiting any results achieved. That is not conducive to sound progress in the process of Council reform or in line with the fundamental interests of the broad membership.

Going forward, China stands ready to work with all parties and, as mandated in decision 62/557, by staying committed to the Member States-driven principle and the search for a package solution, to persevere with broad consultations with patience within the intergovernmental negotiations framework and steadily build a consensus. China appeals to other Member States to demonstrate political will, participate actively and constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations during the next General Assembly session and work together to move the intergovernmental negotiations forward in the direction that garners the widest possible acceptance and serves the common interests of all Member States and the long-term interests of the United Nations.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to you, Madam President, for submitting the oral technical decision 73/554 to roll over the consideration of the reform of the Security Council to the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly. We support its adoption.

The issue of Security Council reform is one of the most important on our Organization's agenda. This is about the organ that bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations has introduced important new elements for understanding the contours of the eventual reform. The discussion has been rich and productive, and the current negotiation format has proven its usefulness and relevance. All of this has made it possible to identify issues on which it is very likely that we can bring our positions closer together in future.

However, as the discussions during the current session showed, major differences of opinion on many aspects persist among Member States. In our view, they form the crux of the problems facing the intergovernmental negotiations. Everything else, including the methodology for the negotiations, is secondary, no matter how some delegations try to prove otherwise. It is obvious that against the backdrop of the enormous political significance of the issue of Security Council reform, we must continue to seek a solution that enjoys much greater support among Member States than the formal requirement for a two-thirds majority. The best route is through consensus. Previous sessions have convincingly demonstrated the futility and danger of trying to resolve the issue without taking into account

the full spectrum of positions. Further work should be carried out in a transparent and inclusive manner, without setting artificial deadlines.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Madam President, and Mrs. Nusseibeh and Mr. Braun, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, for their work. They have performed their duties as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session professionally, responsibly and impartially.

**Mr. Matjila** (South Africa): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting and for the diligence with which you, your Chef de Cabinet, Kwabena Osei-Danquah, and your excellent team have conducted our deliberations on the rollover decision 73/554 that we have just adopted. We also want to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to the co-Chairs, Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates — whom we wish well with her project — and Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg, for the highly professional way in which they facilitated the intergovernmental negotiations.

I take the floor to explain my delegation's vote on the rollover decision (decision 73/554) that we have just adopted and to register our priorities as we come to the end of this urgent meeting. My delegation joined the consensus on the rollover decision because we believe that this forum, as the chief deliberative organ of the United Nations, is still the most appropriate platform for addressing the challenges facing multilateralism today, including the comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

We welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly on a separate operative paragraph 3 in order to spotlight the need to continue negotiations for the early reform of the Security Council. We further welcome the fact that the rollover decision refers only to two important documents, namely, the framework document and the final revised document of the seventy-third session. These two documents are critical if we are to make meaningful progress in the intergovernmental negotiations going forward.

We wish to express our concern about the lack of progress in the intergovernmental negotiations, and we call on the General Assembly to demonstrate the much-needed leadership and commitment necessary to conclude this agenda item as soon as possible.

There was a total of five intergovernmental negotiations meetings this session, which were very helpful in enriching one another's positions and intergovernmental negotiations priorities, but, unfortunately, there remain deep-seated divergences among member States on how to take the intergovernmental negotiations forward. My delegation wishes to point out that there is an anomaly in the reasoning of those who believe that the time is not right for Council reform, even though they joined the consensus decision in 1993 to embark on this process of transforming the central organ of our Organization to reflect the realities and structures of the current global configuration.

Since this is the last plenary meeting under this agenda item for this session, it is only fitting that I join the overwhelming majority of Member States in reiterating the following points.

First, there is an urgent need to move the intergovernmental negotiations towards text-based negotiations. Again, a total of 164 countries, more than 80 per cent of the United Nations membership, have called for text-based negotiations throughout the period. A normalization of the intergovernmental negotiations process is the only option towards meaningful progress. It is only through a give-and-take process of negotiations that we will break the 11-year stalemate of the intergovernmental negotiations and give confidence to the people outside the United Nations system.

Secondly, we are satisfied that the language in the final revised document on the Common African Position, as enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus, has been strengthened, but we still maintain our view that the reference to the Ezulwini Consensus should indeed be included in the comments section of the document. During the five meetings of the intergovernmental negotiations, we did not hear any delegation oppose the proposal. We remain disconcerted by the fact that that proposal, which is supported by the overwhelming majority of Member States here, as it was earlier, has not been considered.

Thirdly, we are still convinced that the intergovernmental negotiations session needs to be extended beyond June in order to reassure the international community that we are committed to the early implementation of the 2005 mandate of our Heads of State. We do not believe that because there are still divergences of views, we must simply conclude

the intergovernmental negotiations session, as we have just done.

South Africa strongly believes that not only is it incumbent on us to do so, but we also have an obligation to humankind and the marginalized majority of the world population to make the Council representative. In that vein, my delegation remains of the view that the only way to make concrete progress in this debate is to obtain a future mandate through a General Assembly resolution, as we believe that the open, oral decision taken in this body will simply serve to perpetuate the stalemate and lead to further inaction.

The time will be ripe during the upcoming session to put these discussions into the form of a resolution, based on the Common African Position on Council reform and taking into account the position of other interest groups.

In conclusion, Madam President, we look forward to the seventy-fourth session and have no doubt that your colleague, Mr. Tijjani Muhammad Bande, the incoming President of the General Assembly, will build on the progress made thus far in the intergovernmental negotiations. For us, the success of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-fourth session would be a fitting tribute and a perfect gift for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, next year.

The challenge before us is to muster the necessary political will and realize meaningful progress with a view to concluding a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

Finally, South Africa would like to thank all Member States for the professional way in which they presented their views, including my friends in other groups, whom all present know. We had a robust discussion, but we also had good times.

**Mr. Kim Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the outset, I should like to express my sincere gratitude to you, Madam President, for your leadership and active engagement in the process of the intergovernmental negotiations. I wish also to express my deep appreciation to the co-Chairs, Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Ambassador Christian Braun, for their tireless efforts and consultative spirit in the process of facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations.

My delegation welcomed the adoption of the oral decision (decision 73/554) to roll over the intergovernmental negotiations to the seventy-fourth

session of the General Assembly and to renew its mandate to consider Security Council reform.

At the intergovernmental negotiations session, the principle of increasing the representation of developing countries, especially African countries and the small and medium-sized countries, is being consolidated. It sets the right direction for the intergovernmental negotiations to achieve the ultimate goal of reform. General Assembly decision 62/557 states that the intergovernmental negotiations process is the sole legitimate platform to discuss Security Council reform and that its basis should be the positions of and proposals made by Member States.

As the positions of the parties on core issues remain seriously divided, the path to setting a timeline for reform or rush into text-based negotiations will only counter the achievements made so far.

In conclusion, my delegation calls upon Member States to demonstrate political will at the next session and to participate in the intergovernmental negotiations in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly decision to conduct democratic and substantial consultations.

**Mr. Vongxay** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): Let me begin by thanking you, Madam President, for having convened this meeting and for your commitment to Security Council reform. Likewise, my delegation wishes to express our sincere appreciation to the intergovernmental negotiations co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and of Luxembourg, for their tireless efforts.

Security Council reform is a very important issue for all States Members of the United Nations. Given the current geopolitical landscape, we face many challenges that threaten peace, security and development at the national, regional and international levels. The Organization should respond appropriately to such challenges. In that context, the discussion on Security Council reform should be pursued in a comprehensive, balanced, inclusive and transparent manner, taking into account the interests of all Member States, in order to maintain unity and solidarity among the membership.

We are of the view that the agreement under decision 62/557 is a suitable mechanism for making a concise and technical rollover decision on the Security Council reform negotiations. Such momentum should be continued as the spirit of the intergovernmental

negotiations. The Lao People's Democratic Republic supports decision 73/554, which we just adopted. The decision reflects the progress that we have made in the current session. Such a development should not be ignored, and the intergovernmental negotiations should continue in a more constructive and open manner in order to reach a consensus.

Finally, my delegation firmly believes that all views and proposals of Member States should be carefully considered with the aim of attaining an outcome that is acceptable to all States Members of the United Nations.

**Mr. Braun** (Luxembourg): It is my pleasure to speak today on behalf of the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform for this seventy-third session. I would be remiss if I did not begin by thanking you, Madam President, for the trust and confidence that you placed in Ambassador Nusseibeh and me to steer the intergovernmental negotiations this session. You set both us and the broader membership a target to build on the progress made so far in a spirit of goodwill and compromise, with political will, courage and resolve, as well as flexibility and constructiveness. I hope that we have been able to live up to your ambitions.

As co-Chairs, we feel that the outcome of this session, namely, a substantive revision of the document on elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, has gently nudged the needle for reform forward. We welcome its inclusion in decision 73/554, just adopted by consensus. However, it is certain that any successes during this session can only be attributed to the work and engagement of Member States, and we again thank them all for the support extended to us.

Today we close a somewhat difficult session of the intergovernmental negotiations, which saw Member States divided both on process as well as on substance. Some turbulence is certainly to be expected on an issue that is so protracted, complex and vital to the future of the Organization. However, a reform that enjoys the widest possible political acceptance will be achieved only through greater dialogue, exchanges and genuine political will from Member States. We should not shy away from truly interactive discussions, even when they become difficult. While the intergovernmental negotiations process certainly has inherent flaws, only increased engagement will create the necessary conditions to build convergence among all Member States.

On that note, I would like to commend the effort made by many groups this session to reach out to each other outside our formal intergovernmental negotiations meetings. Such kinds of informal interactions and discussions will be vital to the continuing success of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

The document entitled "Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration" directly builds on the work of the previous session, as well as encapsulating the work of the seventieth and seventy-first sessions. We saw the continuation as a valuable step in and of itself. The simple fact that this year's intergovernmental negotiations did not start from scratch should not be underestimated.

As members will recall, our first meeting in January presented us with polarized views on the potential conduct of work for the session. However, Member States managed to forge consensus around taking the document from last year forward and using it as a basis for our discussions this year. That is a clear demonstration of political will for continuity in this process. We hope that the document will be of use in future sessions.

We recognize that today's document is not perfect, or for that matter complete. Indeed, we have clearly heard diverging views on how the document can be improved. However, we believe that it represents good incremental progress, resulting directly from our discussions and interactive dialogue on all key issues, and work that is ready to be picked up again next year.

The document reflects several new areas of convergence in the views of Member States, particularly in the areas of the Council's working methods and the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. That identification of further areas on which we can all agree is positive but also highlights that a greater focus now needs to be placed on building bridges regarding the remaining key issues of reform.

We also saw existing diverging positions further clarified, which is an important step towards bringing positions closer together, including on the question of cross-regional representation in the Council, and differing views on categories of membership. And, very importantly, within the document the African position is now incorporated in a more nuanced way than before, reflecting the increasing support for Africa's aspirations expressed among the broader membership.



As the intergovernmental negotiations continue, given the importance of the topic at hand, in the coming years Member States may also wish to consider the desirability of establishing formalized continuity mechanisms and an institutional memory for the intergovernmental negotiations in order to improve our work.

As you, Madam President, reminded us during the first meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations this year, this is perhaps the most complex process undertaken by the General Assembly. The strategic importance of the Security Council, which holds the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, makes reform not only a vital but also a sensitive issue and renders this process one that requires the perseverance of Member States and a great deal of balancing by the Chairs.

However, it is clear that the work of the intergovernmental negotiations must continue irrespective of the difficulty of the task. Day by day our work becomes increasingly more important in ensuring that we have a United Nations that is fit for purpose, with strong, credible and trusted institutions. We cannot afford to disengage from our work, even if it continues to take much longer than most of us would consider optimal or desirable.

As we wrap up our term as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, on behalf of Ambassador Nusseibeh and myself, I would like to convey what a great privilege it has been to contribute, even in a small way, to these efforts. We once again thank you, Madam President, for your stewardship and Member States for their trust and support. If I could, I would also like to personally thank Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh for being present today.

**The President:** I would like once again to acknowledge and thank the two co-Chairs for their tireless work and to thank all Member States for their very constructive and active engagement in this very challenging process. I would also like to seek their permission to publicly thank and acknowledge my team for their highly professional and committed work.

We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 124?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.*