May I begin by expressing Pakistan’s condemnation of the horrible terrorist attacks in Amman yesterday. Let me convey the profound grief and condolences of the Pakistan delegation, Government and people to the Government and people of the Hashmite Kingdom of Jordan and to the families of the victims.

Mr. President,

We are considering once again the important issue of the reform of the Security Council, together with the Council’s report to the General Assembly. This discussion is taking place in the wake of the 2005 Summit and in the midst of the process being led by you to implement the Summit’s decisions.

The rationale and justification for the reform of the Security Council is clear. The Council should be reformed to make it more representative, more transparent, more accountable and more effective. However, there are significant differences on how these objectives can be achieved.

As we open this debate, the positions of all parties on the reform of the Security Council are well known. They have been reaffirmed in recent days.

The position of the Uniting for Consensus group which was circulated during the last session in Document (No. A/59/L.68) is also known to the entire membership. The members of the UfC continue to believe that our proposal offers the most promising basis to evolve a consensus, especially on the issue of equitable representation on the Security Council.

Let me reiterate the virtues of the UfC proposal:

One, our proposal is fair and equitable. It respects the principle of sovereign equality of states and does not discriminate between Member States.

Two, it will increase the opportunity for all UN Member States, including the small and medium states to secure more representation on the Security Council;

Three, it will enhance the accountability of Security Council members through the democratic mechanism of periodic elections and, if agreed, re-elections.
Four, our proposal is simple. It proposes a direct Charter amendment for approval of the Assembly.

Five, the UfC proposal is realistic. Since it can accommodate the interests and positions of all member states, this proposal, if approved, is likely to secure the required ratifications, including the necessary ratification of the 5 permanent members of the Security Council.

Six, the greatest virtue of the UfC proposal is its flexibility. It can accommodate, through variable arrangements in each region, the aspirations and interests of the majority of the membership including regional groups such as the African Group.

Mr. President,

We respect and understand Africa’s desire for equitable representation on the Security Council. Africa is striving to redress an “historic injustice”. We believe that the UfC proposal is entirely compatible with the African approach. Both our position and that of the African Union is based on the principle that each region should be in a position to determine its own specific arrangement for representation on the Council. Africa’s demand for two “permanent seats”, in our view, is different from other proposals which seek permanent membership for individual states. Africa, as we see it, seeks permanent seats for the entire region. We note also that against the two empowered seats sought by Africa, representation on the Council could be from 2 or, through rotation by a larger number of African states, under arrangements to be made by the Africans themselves. In our view, rotation is the best means to ensure the representation of regional interests, including those of Africa, as well as to provide greater opportunities to all States to secure more frequent membership of the Security Council.

Since our proposal is based on a regional approach, it could also accommodate the interests of sub-regional groups, such as the Arab League, CARICOM and Central America. Other Groups, such as the OIC, could also secure assured representation against the seats allocated to the region of Africa or Asia. Moreover, through the provision for possible re-election, the UfC proposal offers the possibility for long term and even continued membership for some states if, (repeat) if they are nominated for this purpose by their respective regions.

Mr. President,

We are all aware that agreement within the general membership on the issue of representation on an enlarged Security Council will require difficult and patient negotiations. Member States must be allowed the necessary time and space to reconcile their positions and to evolve a solution acceptable to the entire membership. It is, therefore essential to engage in a dialogue and constructive negotiations to achieve an equitable and widely-acceptable solution.

Mr. President,
Meanwhile, we also need to give consideration to the other aspects of the reform of the Security Council i.e. its working methods - the so-called Cluster-II issues.

For a large majority of Member States, especially the small and medium states, the reform of the Security Council implies, first and foremost, an improvement in its working methods. The General Assembly’s Open Ended Working Group had reached provisional agreement on a large number of proposals to improve the Council’s working methods. Some of these are being implemented. But the majority of these still await translation into the practice of the Council.

I would like to thank Ambassador Andrey Denisov, President of the Security Council, for presenting the Council’s report to the General Assembly. The quality and content of the Security Council Report to the General Assembly has improved. The Report at present, provides a good statistical record and a ready reference regarding issues under the Council’s consideration. However, it does not contribute to a better understanding by the general UN membership of how the Council has dealt with specific situations and the ways in which it has reached its decisions. In this context, we reiterate our concerns at the encroachment by the Security Council on issues – such as those considered in thematic debates – which lie, more appropriately, within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly or the ECOSOC. Pakistan, therefore, supports the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/126, in particular its call for Security Council reports to the General Assembly on specific topics; briefings to the President of the General Assembly by the President of the Security Council; and joint meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and ECOSOC. These mechanisms should be institutionalized as soon as possible.

However, the reform of the Council’s working methods must go beyond such improvements in its operating processes. Openness, transparency and inclusiveness should be introduced in the working modalities of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, specially the “Sanctions Committees” and those dealing with generic issues, such as terrorism and non-proliferation, which are of direct concern to the general membership. The Council’s work must cease to be conducted in virtual secrecy from the general membership. As envisaged in the Security Council’s provisional rules, most of the Council’s work should be conducted in public meetings, as was the case until the end of the Cold War. Informal consultations should be the exception rather than the rule they have become. Member States which are most directly concerned in an issue should be able to participate in both the open and informal meetings of the Council. Draft resolutions and proposals circulated informally in the Security Council should be available to all member states, at least before they are provided to the media.

Mr. President,

In the context of improvement of the Council’s working methods, Pakistan is sympathetic to most of the proposals contained in the informal paper circulated by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. The areas covered in the Annex to the paper --- the Council’s relationship with the General Assembly and other principal organs; implementation of Council decisions; the working of
subsidiary bodies; the use of the veto; the conduct of peacekeeping operations; and the “integration” of new Council members. – are all vital to ensure transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability in the work of the Security Council. My delegation looks forward to an early opportunity to offer our suggestions and views to enrich the proposals circulated by these five delegations and to evolve agreement on them.

Mr. President,

Pakistan believes that any decision on the reform of the Security Council should be adopted by consensus or at least the widest possible agreement. Our reasons for taking this position are clear. The reform of the Security Council is an important issue. It impinges on the national security interest of every member state. Any precipitate move to secure a decision by a vote would revive regional tensions and resurrect divisions within the Organization. It would once again eclipse, and possibly derail, the rest of the agenda of UN reform. It could halt the heartening progress we are making, or expect to make, on the establishment of a Peace-building Commission, on terrorism, on the Human Rights Council, and, most importantly, on the implementation of the Development Agenda. Moreover, any proposal for Security Council reform that is adopted by a divisive vote, is unlikely to be translated into reality since it will not obtain the ratification of 2/3rd of the membership, including the 5 permanent members. Indeed, a divisive vote is likely to freeze the status-quo in the Security Council and thus squander the opportunity for its early reform and democratization.

Mr. President,

You have been mandated by the 2005 Summit to conduct consultations on the issue of Security Council reform and report progress before the end of the Session. We trust that, at the appropriate time, you will convene a meeting of the Open Ended Working Group on this issue and enable delegations to exchange views in order to further advance the possibilities for consensus on the important issue of Security Council reform, including the improvement of its working methods.

Thank you.