Mr. President,

We are pleased to see you chairing the General Assembly, as it considers the vital question of equitable representation and increase in membership of the Security Council.

Pakistan welcomes your wise decision to appoint two of our able colleagues, the Ambassadors of Tunisia and Romania, to co-facilitate the Inter-Governmental Negotiations this year. I wish to convey to them our profound gratitude for accepting this responsibility. I also assure them, as well as you, Mr. President, of my delegation’s support.

Pakistan fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Cardi of Italy, on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC).

Mr. President,

The deadlock on reform of the Security Council has persisted for more than two decades now. Despite setting a clear goal in Decision 62/557 to seek a solution that could garner “the widest possible political acceptance”, the General Assembly remains as distant from this objective as ever.

This should not come as any surprise.

Without a bridge, people on parallel banks of a river continue to remain separated. Here, in the United Nations, such bridges are built by accommodation and flexibility and cemented by compromise. Unfortunately, these essential ingredients have been
conspicuous by their absence in our negotiations on Security Council reform.

Not everyone however has been short on flexibility.

The UfC group has twice revised its proposal in a genuine spirit of compromise. And as evident from the UfC statement delivered earlier by Ambassador Cardi, our group stands ready to engage constructively in this process.

But it takes more than one hand to clap, Mr. President.

The hand that refuses to clap” represents a handful of countries, which have sought to promote their self-arrogated right to a privileged and unequal status. This selfish pursuit of national ambition is the real reason that has prevented us from making the Security Council more democratic, accountable, transparent and effective.

**Mr. President,**

We cannot change the past. But we can determine the future if the right lessons are learnt from past efforts at reform. In the IGN process, quick fixes and procedural maneuvers have never yielded positive results. A genuine agreement on substance is required to make progress on issues as consequential as reform of the Security Council.

In protracted negotiations it is impossible to find solutions at the extreme ends of political positions. In short, compromises leading to convergence on substantive matters are the only way forward. The last three sessions of the IGN testify to this important lesson.

The IGN is the only forum that can achieve progress towards our shared goal for a reformed Security Council. The IGN’s nature must be respected if we wish it to serve its purpose. It is a membership driven process, based on the proposals and positions of Member States and negotiating groups. This process needs to be open, transparent, predictable and inclusive. It must maintain an ambience of mutual respect allowing Member States to engage constructively.
Mr. President,

Let me now outline my delegation’s position on Security Council reform.

We support expansion of the Security Council in the category of elected non-permanent seats, on the basis of equitable geographic distribution and a system of fair rotation. More elected members will enhance regional representation and ownership, adding legitimacy to the Council. We want a more democratic, accountable, transparent and effective Security Council that reflects the interests and aspirations of all UN Member States. In pursuit of these universally agreed principles, Pakistan firmly opposes the creation of new permanent seats.

However, we have reverence for the African Common Position, which voices the demand of an entire continent. As such, it is inherently different from the demand of permanent seats in pursuit of national ambitions.

Mr. President,

New permanent seats are the antithesis of the principles enshrined in the UN Charter. Addition of more such seats to the Council will only serve to satisfy the hunger for power and privilege of a few, without addressing the actual question of equitable representation on the Security Council. In the absence of periodic elections and rotation, new permanent members would not be accountable to the wider membership.

The Council’s working methods will become more opaque rather than transparent. And if today, the Council remains paralyzed and ineffective due to clashing political interests among the five permanent members, we can well imagine how indecisive and gridlocked it will become with twice the number of permanent members.

There is no good rationale or logic for more permanent seats. Besides, even if one were to contemplate additional permanent seats on the basis of “regional representation”, can we ever achieve equitable
distribution in the category of permanent seats?

Despite the logic of these arguments, the much-needed expansion of the Council has been held hostage to an illogical demand for decades.

Mr. President,

Nevertheless, we are again ready to engage on these issues in this year’s IGN. In the last IGN session, the membership discussed a paper by the IGN Chair on the two key issues of reform: Working methods; and, relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. The paper, in our view, reflected a general convergence on some important principles. It is imperative that these principles continue to be reinforced, and not contradicted, when proposals and ideas are shared on other key issues of reform.

Mr. President,

Before I conclude, let me once again stress the importance of embracing flexibility and rejecting rigid approaches. The first expansion of the Security Council was completed in a span of almost three years. All UN members benefited equally at that time as the Council’s non-permanent seats were increased from six to ten.

But this stalemate of over 24 years has not benefitted any Member State that aspires to serve in the Council. It seems that no Member State can have its equal and fair share because some amongst us just want it ALL! This is not just unfortunate; it represents selfish disregard of others.

I thank you, Mr. President.