

Statement of the Permanent Representative on the Report of the Security Council and the “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters”

Mr. President,

Let me begin by expressing our deep condolences to the Government and people of Indonesia as well as to Australia and other countries who lost their nationals in the recent tragedy in Bali. We hope that the perpetrators of this atrocity will soon be brought to justice.

2. We also express our appreciation to Ambassador Martin Belinga-Eboutou, the Permanent Representative of Cameroon, and the current President of the Security Council, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. May I thank those delegations which have congratulated Pakistan on its election to the Council for the next 2 years. I would in turn like to felicitate Angola, Chile, Spain and Germany on their election to the Council last month. We look forward to working closely with them as well as with other Council members in our common pursuit of global peace and security. I would wish to pay special tribute to the outgoing members of the Council for their important contributions to its work.

Mr. President,

3. This year, the Security Council's annual report, submitted in accordance with Article 15 of the Charter, has been presented in a new improved format and with an analytical summary. We appreciate the conscious effort to reduce the size of the report and avoid repetition. And the active role played by the Council's non-permanent members in making these improvements.

5. First, the visible successes. The Council's supervision and support for a number of peacekeeping operations – specially those in Timor Leste and Sierra Leone – have been the most visible manifestations of collective security as visualized in the UN Charter. Both the Security Council and the United Nations have learnt appropriate lessons from the past. We hope that in future too, the Council, the Secretariat and the Troop Contributing Countries will work together to ensure effective realization of the larger purposes of the re-establishment and preservation of peace and security in the troubled parts of the world.

6. During the past year, the Security Council made a significant contribution to combating international terrorism including the provisions to arrest the financing and support of terrorism through the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

7. The Security Council also played a role in shaping the events in Afghanistan. Yet, all these endeavours to build peace and restore hope in Afghanistan remain under threat so long as the international community, including the Security Council, are unable to consolidate security, and establish President Karzai's authority, in all parts and regions of Afghanistan. To this end, Pakistan has continued to urge the Security Council, the UN Secretary-General, and the major powers, to authorize the deployment of additional international forces, especially in regional centers. It is imperative for the Council to take early and resolute action for this purpose.

8. The Middle East crisis, and the prolonged tragedy of the Palestinian people, have continued to challenge the credibility of the Security Council. The Council achieved a high point when it adopted resolution 1397, creating the framework for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the principle of land for peace. Since then, however, confronted by repeated Israeli military incursions, punitive measures, the economic strangulation of the Palestinian people and spiraling violence in the Occupied Territories, the Security Council's deliberations have become almost a parody of the role which the Charter had perceived for it.

Mr. President,

9. Among the most glaring of the Council's failures has been its inability to reverse the threat to peace in South Asia, even though the India-Pakistan issue and the underlying dispute over Jammu and Kashmir remains on the Council's agenda. With one million troops deployed along Pakistan's eastern border and the Line of Control in Kashmir with repeated threats of war and force have been held out by Indian leaders with artillery and small arms exchanges are a daily feature on the Line of Control. There could be no clearer and more tangible threat to international peace and security, even if one were to discount the danger arising from the fact that the two antagonists possess nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

10. The UN Charter requires that in the event of a breach of the peace, or a threat of use of force, the Security Council must address the situation with a view to restoring international peace and security. The Council's responsibility to prevent a conflict in South Asia, which has been described as "the most dangerous place in the world", is clear and present. Yet, although the Council's attention was drawn to the crisis repeatedly during the year, including by the UN Secretary-General himself, the Council remained impassive. The Council could not even hold an Arria Formula meetings on this issue. War may have been temporarily averted by the active diplomacy of some major powers. However, the Council, nor the international community can afford to sit idle; the world cannot afford to substitute conflict management for conflict resolution.

Mr. President,

11. During the Security Council's debate on this report, Ambassador Mahbubani of Singapore referred to the Council's "orphans" – peoples on whose behalf the Council had undertaken to act but never did. Most prominent among these orphans are the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Council has adopted a series of resolutions defining a clear framework for the political disposition of Kashmir in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. These remain to be implemented.

12. The Council should not be oblivious to the erosion of its credibility flowing from non-compliance with its resolution. Ineffectiveness and weakness flow not only from an absence of determination and will to secure compliance with certain resolutions of the Security Council. They are also manifested by the acceptance and application of double standards and discrimination. The Council's resolutions represent international legality; they must be respected comprehensively by all sides, in all regions and all circumstances.

Mr. President,

13. The Council's failures have not been due mainly to the shortcomings in the Council's procedures or its structures. These failures are principally due to a shortfall in the commitment of Member States, individually and collectively, to conduct their policies, and uphold their legitimate national interests, strictly in accordance with the UN Charter and principles.

14. We are convinced that the departures from principle witnessed in the Council would become more isolated and infrequent if the Council were to become a more representative body. Pakistan therefore continues to support the expansion of the Security Council. At the same time, we will continue to resist proliferation of the "centers of privilege" represented by the unfortunate institution of the five permanent members of the Security Council and their veto power. It is clear that, for the present, consensus within the General Assembly would favour the expansion of only the non-permanent, elected members of the Security Council.

15. There have been prolonged endeavours to improve the Council's working methods, its transparency and effectiveness. We appreciate these. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the improved practices should be now codified.

Mr. President,

16. We also welcome the recent efforts to make the Council's work more transparent and inclusive for the rest of the UN membership. Rule 48 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure specifically provides that: "Unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public." Despite the increase in the number of public debates and the consultations with troop contributing countries, the Council's decisions continue to be made behind closed doors. In a statement to the Council in 1994, the representative of one of the 5 permanent members described such informal consultations in the following words: "Informal meetings are not even real Council meetings; they have no official existence, and are assigned no number. Yet it is in these meetings that all the Council's work is carried out."

17. The argument, that there is a trade-off between efficiency and transparency, is a false one. Indeed, it can be argued more cogently that the Wilsonian principle of "open covenants, openly arrived at", is the one that will enhance the effectiveness of the Council and the consistent application of the UN Charter's principles.

18. We believe that the General Assembly, the most universal and representative organ of the United Nations should recommend the following measures to the Security Council and its members:

One: The improvements made in the Council's working methods should be codified as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report.

Two: Rule 48 of Security Council's Provisional Rules of Procedures should be adhered to in letter and spirit.

Three: A compendium should be drawn up of those Security Council resolutions whose implementation remains outstanding.

Four: The Security Council, in cooperation with the Secretary-General, should undertake a thorough consideration of how the provisions of the Chapter VI of the Charter can be fully utilized to promote the pacific settlement of conflicts and disputes.

I thank you, Mr. President.