

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative
of Pakistan to the UN, on agenda item 123**

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

(15 November 2021)

Mr. President,

Pakistan welcomes the General Assembly’s resumption of consideration of the issue of a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Group.

2. A UN Security Council, which is more representative, democratic, transparent, effective and accountable, is indispensable to address the multiple challenges that the world confronts today.

3. We look forward to the appointment of the Co-Chairs of the IGN and to continuing our work in that indispensable format of this session. We also thank the distinguished Ambassadors of Poland and Qatar, and your predecessor, H.E. Volkan Bozkir, for the important progress made last year in the IGN process.

4. The progress made last year in enlarging the areas of convergence and reducing the areas of divergence is reflected in the “Elements Paper” submitted by the previous Co-Chairs.

5. There was new convergence on the need for:

One, expansion in the elected non-permanent members of the Security Council, especially from Africa, Asia and Latin America;

Two, greater transparency and inclusiveness in the work of the Council;
and

Three, enhancing the Council's relationship with the General Assembly.

6. As the Elements Paper acknowledged, the IGN process is the “Legitimate and most appropriate platform to pursue the Security Council reform” and that a comprehensive reform can only be achieved through a Council that is representative of the interests of all Member States – small, medium and large. Therefore, as repeatedly affirmed by the Assembly, any reform of the Council must be based on the “widest possible agreement” of the entire membership of the United Nations.

7. However, despite the encouraging progress in the IGN last year, there remain wide divergences among Member States on several key issues.

8. On the categories of membership, it is essential to recall that the discussions involved various kinds of categories: 2 year non-permanent seats; longer-term non-permanent seats; re-electable non-permanent membership; permanent seats representing regions or individual States; permanent membership with veto, no veto or “deferred” veto. There is no clear division between permanent and non-permanent categories of future Security Council membership.

9. Similarly, there are proposals for a prohibition of the veto; its restriction; its suspension; its expansion to new permanent members.

10. Likewise, on equitable representation, there are different approaches – ensuring equity through recourse to regional representation, as proposed by Africa and the UfC; or enhanced representation of individual States, as in the G-4 proposal.

Mr. President,

11. We hope that the IGN process this year will make renewed efforts to enlarge the areas of convergence. One area where convergence can be broadened is on the working methods of the Council. We also need to reduce the divergence in positions on the key issues I have mentioned.

12. The negotiating process will be in a position to move to consideration of a text only once such key divergences are reconciled and there is broad convergence on the main elements – the 5 clusters – of a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Any precipitate move to artificially accelerate the negotiating process, such as the submission of a negotiating text, could derail the entire negotiating process.

13. As in previous years, the IGN should hold separate sessions devoted to consideration of each of these “clusters” and seek to broaden the areas of convergence and reduce divergences.

14. Procedural changes to the IGN process will have to be adapted by “widest possible agreement” of all Member States (as provided in decision 52/30) i.e. by consensus. We are prepared to discuss how smaller States – Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and others - can be assisted in maintaining records and documentation on the progress made in the IGN process.

15. We are, however, not in favour of transforming the IGN process into a public exercise. The compromises which will be needed to achieve “widest

possible agreement” cannot be negotiated in a public format. The past experience in the OEWG confirms this conclusion.

16. The UfC continues to believe that its proposal for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council offers the best basis for a compromise and consensus. Our proposal envisages:

One, an expansion of SC membership to 26/27, with the addition of 11-12 new non-permanent members. It is the differences between the veto-wielding States which are at the core of the Security Council’s inability to respond effectively to the conflicts and threats to peace and security. The “problem” cannot be the “solution”;

Two, all improvements to Security Council’s work have emanated mainly from the E-10 – the non-permanent members. A larger number of non-permanent members will enlarge their ability to balance the influence of the P-5 and add dynamism to the work of the Security Council;

Three, the addition of 11-12 non-permanent members will ensure “equitable representation” – the key objective of the SC reform process. If the six additional permanent members are included in the Council, it will (a) reduce the prospects for representation for the rest of the 182 UN Member States; and (b) increase the influence of the permanent members;

Four, the UfC’s proposal to add only non-permanent members, elected periodically by the General Assembly, is also more democratic and consistent with the Charter’s prescription that the Security Council “acts on behalf” of the entire membership of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

17. We are sensitive to and supportive of Africa's legitimate quest to rectify the "historic injustice" against Africa as reflected in Common African Position as well as the similar injustice against the Arab group, the SIDS, and also Latin America. We believe that the UfC's proposal regarding "regional representation" can contribute to redressing such historic injustices and do so in ways that will not prevent or indefinitely prolong the adoption of any Charter amendment required to reform the Security Council.

18. The UfC remains staunchly opposed to proposals for permanent seats for individual Member States. There is no justification for creation of "new centers of privilege" within the UN, contrary to the principle of sovereign equality of UN Member States. There are no States which can justifiably claim such unequal status, on the basis of any objective criteria. Any country seeking more frequent presence on the Security Council should do so by subjecting itself to the democratic process of periodic election by the G.A.

Mr. President,

19. The UfC remains open to a frank and detailed discussion on ways and means of accommodating the aspirations of all Member States, the African, Asian and Latin American groups as well as other groups – such as the OIC, Arab, SIDS – within an equitable and comprehensive reform of the Security Council. We are convinced that the UfC's proposal can serve as a framework for such an inclusive and equitable reform of the Council.

I thank you.