

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, during the first meeting of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council**

(8 February 2022)

**Co-chairs,**

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Group.

2. We welcome the resumption of the Inter-Governmental Negotiation (IGN) process for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council and express our support for the work of the Co-chairs in the days ahead.

3. We look forward to receiving the calendar of the remaining IGN meetings from the Co-Chairs at the earliest, consistent with the practice of previous IGN sessions.

**Co-chairs,**

4. A comprehensive reform of the Security Council can only be achieved through a Council which is more representative, democratic, transparent, effective as well as accountable and is representative of the interests of all Member States - small, medium and large.

5. As the General Assembly has agreed, any reform must therefore, entail the broadest possible consensus of the UN membership.

6. Despite some encouraging progress in the IGN last year, there remain wide divergences among Member States on several key and fundamental issues.

7. That's why, we would have hoped that rather than discussing the procedural issues in the very first IGN meeting, our focus should have remained on substantive issues to enlarge the areas of convergence, and reduce divergences.

8. IGN's current format and proceedings under 62/567 continue to provide us with the framework under which this can be achieved.

9. Any procedural changes to the IGN process will have to be adopted by "widest possible agreement" of all Member States (as provided in decision 52/30) i.e. by consensus.

10. The lesson we have learnt from the last year's IGN is clear. Any precipitate moves to artificially accelerate the negotiating process, through some form of procedural changes could derail the entire negotiating process.

11. The statements we have heard today confirm that there is no agreement to change the nature of the IGN process. We must be under no illusions that the negotiating process can be accelerated through procedural tinkering. To move forward, we must continue the painstaking effort to reconcile the divergences and build broad

convergence on the main elements – the 5 clusters – in order to be in a position to formulate a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

12. Let me also clarify there that we view the “Co-Chairs Elements Paper on Convergences and Divergences” submitted towards the end of last year’s IGN as a “working reference”, which can help Member States to identify further convergences and to find common ground across the five clusters.

13. We have all agreed that the five clusters are all inter-connected. The Elements Paper - which is reflective of co-chairs’ “understanding of and views on” the current state of the IGN process - can only be updated once we complete discussion on all five clusters and the Co-Chairs are able to discern the prospects of broadening the convergences across the 5 clusters.

14. Any move to present fragmented updates after each IGN or cluster discussion is likely to polarize positions, pull Member States further apart and enlarge divergence rather than convergence. Instead of breathing new life, this will kill the process. Instead of the suicide mechanism proposed by some, we sincerely hope that you will utilize your offices to conduct wide consultations in an endeavour to enlarge convergences and reduce divergences on all five clusters.

**Co-chairs,**

15. The last IGN process showed that on the question of equitable representation, there are wide divergences and a variety of `approaches.

16. Given the size of the expansion envisaged, 10-11 new seats, it is clear that the best way to ensure the second element of the reform i.e. equitable geographical representation can be best achieved through recourse to regional representation.

17. This is the model proposed by the UfC and by the African States. And it is fundamentally different from the approach of the G-4 whose members claim permanent seats for themselves in perpetuity as a matter of right – a right borne out of a sense of self-entitlement. This claim is contrary to the Charter’s precept of the sovereign equality of Member States. It is also undemocratic.

References have been made to the “new realities” and the claims by some to be in the Security Council because they have greater “capacity” and willingness to contribute to international peace and security.

If the record is read, the contributions of small and medium states in the Security Council have been much more sizable than the self-interested positions and policies of those ambitious to achieve permanent membership.

Finally, any state which stands in violation of the resolutions of the Security Council for over 50 years does not deserve to even claim the right to any membership on the Council.

18. The regional distribution of 11-12 non-permanent seats proposed by the UfC would ensure “equitable representation” of each region.

19. The UfC's proposal – to add only non-permanent members, which are elected periodically by the General Assembly – is also more democratic. It is consistent with the Charter's provision that the Security Council "acts on behalf" of the entire membership of the General Assembly. If so, the Council must be accountable to the General Assembly and periodic elections are – as in any democracy – is the best means of ensuring accountability.

20. The UfC's position that the existence of permanent members and the veto is the underlying cause of the Security Council's paralysis is well known. The problem cannot be the solution. Moreover, the addition of permanent members would reduce the number of seats available to the rest of the UN's membership. If 6 new permanent members are added, as has been proposed, this would leave only 4/5 additional seats for the rest of 182 members of the UN General Assembly from all 5 regions. This would certainly not amount to the "equitable geographical representation" prescribed in the title of the item under which we are exploring a reform of the Security Council.

**Co-chairs,**

21. The reform of the Security Council should redress the existing imbalances in the regional representation – adding to the representation of the under-represented regions and at least not adding to the representation of the over-represented regions.

We are sensitive to and supportive of Africa's legitimate quest to rectify the "historic injustice" against Africa as reflected in Common African Position. This must be redressed as must similar historic injustices against the Arab group, the OIC countries, the SIDS, and Latin America.

**Co-Chairs,**

22. If I may digress for a moment, and speak as a Member of the OIC. For the last two centuries, the Islamic world has been subjected to historic injustices of monumental proportions. It has no reserved representation on the Security Council, although many of the issues on the Security Council's agenda relate to the Islamic countries.

23. Several OIC Summit meetings have declared clearly that if there is an expansion of the Security Council, the Islamic countries must be represented in any category of membership that is created.

24. We believe that the UfC's proposal regarding "regional representation" can provide a way to redress the historic injustices against Africa, the OIC, the Arab States, the SIDs and other regions.

25. Africa's desire for "equal rights" is very different from the individual claims to permanent membership of the four countries on whose behalf we heard the statement this morning. Africa's demand is for the region, not for individual states.

26. Finally, let me add, that the UfC's approach would ensure not only approval of the reform proposal by the General Assembly, it would also

ensure the adoption of any Charter amendment required to reform the Security Council.

27. We look forward to engaging with other Member States and regional groups to build convergence on a regional representation formula that accommodates all regions and assures “equitable geographical representation”.

**I thank you.**