



Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram during the Annual Debate on Agenda item 121 Entitled 'Question of Equitable Representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council (16 November 2023)

Madam President,

I wish to thank you for convening this important debate and for your leadership and commitment to a more representative, democratic, transparent, effective and accountable Security Council.

2. We also thank the President for reappointing H.E. Mr. Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria, and H.E. Mr. Tareq M. A. M. Albanai, Permanent Representative of Kuwait, as Co-Chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) process and congratulate them on their appointment. They have made well-balanced and significant contributions during the previous IGN cycle. We are confident that the Co-Chairs will make a substantive and path-breaking contribution this year as well.

3. Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by Italy on behalf of UfC, and we would like to add a few points in our national capacity.

Madam President,

4. For more than a month now, a brutal war has raged in Gaza, with blatant war crimes and genocide being perpetrated by Israel against innocent Palestinian women and children. Unfortunately, the Security Council has failed so far to stop the slaughter even after the adoption of the resolution no 2712 after five weeks.

5. It is now more evident than ever, that the primary reason for the Security Council's frequent failure to respond effectively to conflicts and threats to peace and security is the inability of its permanent members to agree on decisive action. Adding new permanent members will statistically multiply the prospects of paralysis in the Council. The problem cannot be the solution.

6. The UfC remains staunchly opposed to any proposals for the creation of additional permanent members in the SC. There is no justification for the creation of 'new centres of privilege' within the UN, contrary to the principle of sovereign equality of UN member states. Any country seeking a more frequent presence on the Security Council

should do so by subjecting itself to the democratic process of periodic election by the General Assembly.

Madam President,

7. The IGN has held constructive discussions in the previous cycle on all five interlinked “clusters” of issues on Security Council reform identified in Decision 62/557. As evident from the Co-Chairs’ revised Elements Paper, the areas of convergence have been broadened, and divergences have been further reduced through the IGN process.

8. However, despite the encouraging progress in the IGN last year, there remain wide divergences among Member States on several key issues within each “cluster”.

9. On the categories of membership, it is essential to recall that the discussions involved not two but several categories of membership: 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 or without a veto.

10. Similarly, there are proposals on the prohibition of the veto; its restriction; its suspension; its expansion (to new permanent members) and its deferment.

11. On regional representation, the UfC and the African Group have proposed specific models. In our view, the “historic injustice” against Africa, as well as Asia, Latin America, and the SIDS, must be redressed, and the unequal advantage accorded to Europe rectified.

12. The UfC’s proposal to add 11-12 new non-permanent seats would offer greater representation to the vast majority of small and medium States, 59 of which have never served on the Security Council. Besides ensuring “equitable geopolitical” representation, a larger number of non-permanent members could balance the inordinate influence of the 5 permanent members. On the other hand, the addition of 4 or 6 new “permanent members” would statistically reduce the prospects for representation for the rest of the 182 member States. Moreover, the periodic election of the non-permanent members

would ensure both the requirements of accountability of Security Council members as well as the democratization of the United Nations.

Madam President,

13. We consider the African demand for two permanent seats for the Continent as being very different from the quest of 4 individual States for permanent membership. The two African seats would be understandably filled by States selected by Africa and “accountable” to Africa and could be replaced by Africa. The four individual aspirants would be accountable to no one and seek to advance their own national interests and ambitions. In any case, there are more than 4 or 6 States – perhaps over 20 – which can, based on their size, defence capability, economic status, peacekeeping role and contributions to peace and security, claim the mantle of more frequent representation on the Security Council. The UfC’s offer for longer-term seats could accommodate this consideration but do so equitably.

14. Lastly, while considerable progress has been made in promoting convergence on the Council’s “working methods”, there are several additional and innovative proposals which need to be further discussed and agreed.

Madam President,

15. It is, therefore, evident that we will require a substantive – not perfunctory – discussion on each of the 5 clusters, which are all closely interrelated. No “model” of Security Council reform can be developed; nor can text-based negotiations start, until we have reconciled the key “divergences” within and between the five “clusters”. The UfC expects that one meeting of the IGN will be devoted, as in the past, to each of the 5 clusters and, thereafter, to their inter-linkages across “clusters”.

Madam President,

16. We have all agreed that the Summit of the Future, to be held next September, should seek to promote the invigoration of the UN’s principal organs, including reform of the Security Council and the

revitalization of the General Assembly, as well as reform of the international financial architecture. My delegation will seek “balanced” progress on these objectives. Our first priority is the reform of the unequal and historically unjust international financial institutions.

17. The decision adopted by the last General Assembly session on the scope of the Summit of the Future stipulated in paragraph (e) that in the preparations for the “Pact of the Future” there would be no “duplication” of existing processes. The consideration of Security Council reform must therefore remain exclusively within the IGN process and observe all the decisions relating to its procedures, including the provisions of General Assembly Resolution No. 53/30 and Decision No. 62/557. No initiative or proposal on Security Council reform outside the IGN process should be entertained by our delegation.

Madam President,

18. The UfC is also a pro-reform group. We remain 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 – all 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, Madam President.

I thank you.