

**Informal meeting of the Plenary on the Intergovernmental
Negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and
increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters
related to the Council**

Statement

by H.E. Mr. David Donoghue

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[Check against delivery]

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to speak today on behalf of Ireland at this first meeting under your Chairmanship with regard to the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform. I commend your efforts since assuming this role in reaching out to Member States and inviting their views.

I would like at the outset to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Tanin, for his tireless efforts over six sessions to make progress on this challenging issue.

Mr. Chairman,

The objective of Security Council reform is a pressing one. The Security Council, with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is entrusted with a unique role and status. It is critical that the Council, acting on behalf of all Member States, enjoys the widest possible legitimacy in terms of its composition and working methods.

As we approach the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it is self-evident that the world we inhabit today is markedly different from the one faced by our predecessors in the immediate post-war period. The structures they put in place have proved remarkably durable, and are a testament to their far-sightedness. Nevertheless, for the Council to act with authority in the name of the international community, it needs to be properly reflective of the world as it has developed.

Ireland, along with many fellow member countries in the cross-regional ACT group and elsewhere, continues to work to improve the working methods of the Council under its current composition. We are working to enhance the Council's accountability, transparency and engagement with the wider membership. Such actions serve to increase the democratic legitimacy of the Council, and, as a result, its power, influence and effectiveness in executing its responsibilities under the UN Charter.

Mr. Chairman,

In terms of future composition, Ireland favours an approach which would involve a total Council membership in the mid-twenties. We would also wish to see arrangements which would not diminish the opportunities for smaller states to serve on the Council at regular intervals. Like many other States, we believe that extending the veto right to additional permanent members of the Council would only compound the difficulties associated with the current arrangements. In this regard, while we would wish to see a complete end to the veto rights of the P5, we welcome current efforts to voluntarily restrict the use of the veto when faced with potential mass-atrocity crimes.

An important criterion for success is that whatever reform model is chosen should enjoy very extensive support across the UN membership. Without such support, there is a risk that the new arrangements would not be stable or durable.

Mr Chairman

As you asked this morning, how do we best take forward the task of securing agreement on reform?

Under your leadership we hope, and indeed it is a pre-requisite, that Delegations will show the flexibility needed to make meaningful progress. Hopefully all Delegations can enter this next phase of negotiations focused on the crucial goal of reform, guided by a spirit of compromise, a willingness to look again at established positions, and to avoid procedural wrangling. The precise methodology for the negotiations will be a matter for you, Mr Chairman. From what we have heard today, my sense is that there is a strong impulse towards text-based negotiations. My delegation would welcome an early start to work on a concise text which might enable us finally to move this issue forward.

Mr. Chairman,

A rebalanced Security Council, together with a modified approach to veto rights, would in our view enhance significantly the effectiveness of the Security Council and make it fit for purpose in the twenty-first century. We hope that all member States will recognise the urgency of making progress on Security Council reform, particularly as the seventieth anniversary of

the foundation of the UN approaches. We hope they will be ready in the current session to tackle this issue at its roots and to find a basis for a workable compromise.

We have spent far too long on the question of Security Council reform. It is high time that we come to grips with the difficult choices to be made and move towards a final accommodation. Ireland stands ready to play its part in the search for agreement.

Thank you.