

**Informal meeting of the General Assembly 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. David Donoghue

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[Check against delivery]

Madam Chair,

I would like at the outset to join with others in welcoming you to the role of Chair of these important negotiations. I believe your leadership will be critical in making substantive progress on this long-delayed issue. I would also like to pay particular tribute to your predecessor Ambassador Rattray of Jamaica whose determination, skill and hard work brought appreciable results.

Those results were, primarily, the Framework Document as circulated on 31 July last. Ireland agreed with Ambassador Rattray, with successive Presidents of the General Assembly, and now with you in a wish to move towards text-based negotiations on Security Council reform. We believe the text of 31 July should be the basis for moving forward.

The time has come for real engagement on substance, and a real effort to identify where compromise might be possible between the various perspectives. I hope that Delegations will resist the temptation to take refuge in procedural debate and thus avoid substantive engagement.

The only way to advance negotiations is to move, as I believe we have now done so, towards discussion of actual changes which we wish to bring about. And, in most respects, these are simple questions. In particular: What size should the Council be? How should members be elected? And, which regions should they come from?

However, before we turn to those key questions, Ambassador Lucas has asked us to examine, in today's session, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Ireland is more than happy to do so. We are very keen to see a significant improvement in the institutional and working relationship between the two bodies.

The Council and the General Assembly have unique and specific responsibilities under the Charter. But they both serve the same membership, that is, they serve us the Member States. We should continually be looking for ways to ensure that the work of both bodies is complementary, and that both are advancing the key objectives of the Charter.

The bottom line is that the relationship between the two bodies must be characterised by cooperation and mutual support, with full respect for their respective mandates. The Security Council and the General Assembly are mutually complementary and mutually reinforcing. The two bodies should work closely together, each respecting the other's mandate, in pursuit of the objectives set out in the UN Charter.

While we seek, through this IGN process, a Council that is more reflective of the 21st century world, we also seek, as an ongoing priority, a Council that is transparent in its work, and is accountable for its actions.

Through the ACT grouping, of which we are a founding member, Ireland is working to bring about a qualitative improvement in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Some significant progress, I am happy to note, is now visible.

For example, the process currently underway to select the UN's next Secretary General – one of the key tasks of the Organisation for 2016 – illustrates a cooperative spirit between the General Assembly and the Council towards a common end.

Similarly, the work being done on implementation of last year's Review of the Peacebuilding architecture seems likely to conclude with identical General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, reflecting both bodies' profound interest in preventing conflict. This also demonstrates the potential for better cooperation between the two bodies and a greater streamlining of effort.

In the same spirit, the current Presidency of the Council, Venezuela, is planning a debate on peacebuilding later this month in which the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and others with expertise to share will participate, and we welcome this.

We think more can be done in this regard. I hope that the Council will feel encouraged to interact closely with other relevant UN bodies in discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Madam Chair,

In addition to our consideration in this inter-governmental process, of the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, this issue is receiving close attention in a number of other processes at the UN.

There is scope for either this or other processes to put forward draft Resolutions, for consideration in the General Assembly or the Council as appropriate, which would try to put this key relationship on a new footing.

We look forward in this inter-governmental process to addressing the other areas for reform which have been identified. Some of these – for example working methods – are, of course, already receiving in depth attention and have been the subject of proposals for improvement.

Madam Chair,

I would like to conclude by again expressing the support of my delegation for your leadership of these negotiations. Ireland made a submission to the Framework Document setting out our preferred model of reform, but prefaced it by saying “we are open to considering various models of expanded membership. Compromise will inevitably be required..” We hope all delegations will enter this new round of discussions with this spirit of compromise in mind.

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