



IRELAND

Statement by

H.E. Mr. David Donoghue
Permanent Representative

at the

Fourth Session of the 10th Round of the Intergovernmental negotiations
on the Reform of the Security Council:
Size and working methods of the Security Council
11th April 2014

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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for your able stewardship of the 10th round of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform. My delegation commends your hard work and strong leadership of the process.

As you have outlined in your letter of 4 April, the five reform elements in Decision 62/557 are inter-related parts of a single package. Success is contingent on agreement in all five areas. We would like to think that Member States will be willing to look at the issue of Security Council reform in the round and be open to compromise and adjustment under individual headings in the interest of obtaining overall agreement.

The goal of Security Council reform would be to enhance the Council's democratic legitimacy, to strengthen its authority and to improve its effectiveness. An important criterion for success, in our view, is that whatever reform model is chosen should enjoy very extensive support across the UN membership. We must be certain that whatever new arrangements are made are overwhelmingly accepted. Without overwhelming support, there is a risk that the new arrangements would not be stable or durable and that the hopes we have all invested in reform of this vital UN organ would not be realised.

There are continuing divisions, for example, over the question of additional permanent seats, with valid points of view and strongly argued positions on either side of this debate. If we are to reach an agreement on Security Council reform which will command the broadest possible support in this Assembly, flexible and imaginative thinking may be needed to bridge current divisions. While recognising the considerable merits of the models currently on offer, we may need to be willing to consider alternative ways forward.

On the issue of the size of an enlarged Security Council, Ireland favours an approach which would involve a total 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.

Mr. Chairman,

An enlarged Council will require us to find ways through the logjams which the Council's own procedures can create. Syria is but one current example. The collective unwillingness or inability of the P5 to arrest the worst humanitarian crisis since the Rwandan genocide has added potency and immediacy to the case for a reformed Council.

Ireland would ideally wish to see the veto rights of the P5 ended. If that cannot be achieved, we see great merit in the proposal by France that the five permanent members of the Security Council would, on certain issues, voluntarily restrict the exercise of their veto right. We would hope, indeed, that the P5 could also agree to waive these rights when dealing with other issues such as flagrant human rights violations or breaches of international humanitarian law.

On working methods of a reformed Security Council, we would wish to see improvements on issues such as penholderships, where current attitudes seem to us unduly restrictive, and transparency in the election of chairs of subsidiary bodies.

As a founding member of the 23-member ACT group, a cross-regional grouping of member states established in 2013, Ireland is working towards a more accountable, coherent and transparent Council. ACT does not take a position on issues relating to the reform, composition or enlargement of a future Council, but rather on improving the working methods of the Security Council in its current composition.

In conclusion, 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.

Thank you.