

**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,

Ireland is pleased to participate once more in these intergovernmental negotiations addressing the important and pressing issue of Security Council reform.

We warmly commend your work as Chair of the IGN during the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, and in particular welcome your efforts to produce elements of convergence on some of the key issues relating to Security Council reform.

It is clear from your paper, and from the discussions to date, that apart from some clearly-articulated differences, there is a strong overall degree of convergence among member countries. In particular, all States see the need for a larger Council, all see the need to accommodate different categories of membership and we all see the need for better balanced representation.

The key question is how to make use of these convergences while addressing the areas where differences exist.

Madam Chair,

Your convergence paper is based on the overwhelming support demonstrated during the IGN for measures to increase interaction between the Council and the wider membership. Indeed, many such ideas have already been put into

practice, in particular under the leadership of the current President of the General Assembly, and seen, for example, in the ongoing process to appoint the Organization's next Secretary General.

The convergence paper also rightly recognises the efforts of the Council to keep its working methods under review, while also noting areas where its working methods could be adapted to ensure accountability and transparency in the event of enlargement.

Madam Chair,

Despite the progress you have made over the past several months, and the efforts of your predecessors, the fact remains that we are still, after 20 years of negotiations, a long way from agreement.

As we and many others have stated repeatedly, the way to make progress is to move towards text-based negotiations. We believe last year's Framework Document, as compiled by the former Chair of the IGN, Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, and as circulated by the President of the General Assembly on 31 July last, can serve as the basis for a negotiating text going forward. That document can however be usefully complemented by a series of specific issue papers detailing areas of convergence across the various topics. In this regard, the paper you have produced identifying the many areas of agreement with regard to the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the size and working methods of an enlarged Council, is timely and useful.

Ireland fully subscribes to the need for the ‘widest possible acceptance’ of measures to reform the Security Council. However, we also believe that making progress will require identifying not just areas of current convergence, but areas of *likely* convergence. The longer States and groups of States adhere to entrenched positions, and are not pushed to compromise, the more distant is the prospect of reform.

For example, on the issue of the size of an enlarged Council, we noted almost universal support for a Council comprising 25 or 26 members. Almost all States recognise that this is the size the Council needs to be to adequately represent a membership of 193 countries, while maintaining its operating efficiency. (As outlined in the convergence paper, this would lead to a voting majority requirement of either 15 or 16.)

We would go further to say that there is also a very high degree of convergence on the breakdown of seats by regional group for a Council of that size.

The main issue which has divided the membership is the categories of membership, and in particular whether some of the new members should hold permanent seats. If this difficult issue were to be resolved, the others would, we believe, quickly fall into place.

As previously outlined, Ireland would favour a Council of 26 comprising the current 5 permanent members, 15 members elected for a two year period, and 6 states elected to a new category of seats with an 8 year term. We are however willing to discuss all models for expansion, and believe a move to text

based negotiation – based in time on realistic compromise proposals from the Chair – would provide the framework for the necessary trade-offs to reach an overall agreement.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion, I would like again to commend your work and that of all Delegations who have participated actively and in good faith in this latest phase of the IGN. We believe all the issues have been fully ventilated, and the positions of States are well known. What we now need are concrete proposals for a reformed and enlarged Security Council.

The alternative to compromise is to allow the current dispensation to continue indefinitely. If there is convergence around the necessity for Security Council reform, then we are neglecting our responsibilities if we fail to take action.

Ultimately, our inability or unwillingness to make real progress risks the credibility of the Security Council as the guarantor of international peace and security. We believe that all States who wish to play an active role in a reformed Security Council should reflect on how best to achieve that outcome, and approach the next phase of negotiations in a constructive spirit.

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