

**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 Tim Mawe
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[Check against delivery]

Madam Chair,

I am pleased to participate today in this second session of the resumed negotiations on Security Council reform. Ireland will continue to support your efforts to achieve convergence among Delegations on the linked issues before us, with a view to achieving a comprehensive and long overdue reform of the size and composition of the Council.

When reflecting today on the future size of the Security Council, it is worth recalling that at the foundation of the UN in 1945, Council members comprised more than twenty percent of the overall UN membership. When the Council experienced its only subsequent enlargement - in 1965 - the 15 members then represented some thirteen percent of the UN's membership. Today, 15 members represent only seven percent of our Organisation's membership of 193.

It seems clear therefore that the Council does not, in simple numerical terms, have sufficient members to adequately represent the universal membership of the UN. There is a need to expand the membership of the Security Council so that it better reflects twenty first century realities in a more equitable and regionally balanced way. African under-representation is perhaps the most blatant injustice of the status quo, but expansion will increase the opportunities for a range of member states that play a particularly significant role in the UN system - financially, in peacekeeping, or through their capacity for regional leadership - to seek election to the Council.

The need for enlargement of the Council is of course well recognised. There is also a very strong degree of convergence concerning the optimum size of the Council. While some favour a Council membership in the low 20s, a very large majority of States appear to support a Council comprising between 25-27 members.

Although we recognise that agreement will be difficult to achieve, and we remain open to considering various models of expanded membership, Ireland favours a Council with 26 members. We believe this would greatly increase the representative character of the Council, without jeopardising the requirement for the Council to be able to operate effectively and efficiently. As with all other areas for discussion in the IGN, Ireland stands ready to discuss the merits of alternative proposals, and to work towards convergence and agreement, in recognition of the fact that compromise will ultimately be required between the opposing perspectives and positions of various countries and groupings.

Madam Chair,

You also asked Delegations to reflect today on the changes to working methods an enlarged Council would require. As others have already stated, this is a separate issue to improvements to the working methods of the Council in its current composition. In that regard, Ireland is pleased to work with fellow members of the ACT group to improve the accountability, transparency and coherence of today's Council.

Separate to the many improvements possible in how the Council currently operates, many of which were aired at the previous session of the IGN, certain specific issues with regard to working methods would arise in the event of an enlarged Council. Some of these are obvious in advance - for example how to ensure that all Council members would have an opportunity to preside over the Council during their tenure, or the required majority for Council decisions. Some may only become apparent once enlargement takes place. None however, should prove insuperable given sufficient political will, and certainly no envisaged difficulty should act as a brake to achieving the increase in Council members so clearly required.

Issues which will also need to be addressed in the context of an expansion of the size of the Council include what is termed the 'cascade' effect, whereby P5 members enjoy privileged access to senior positions within the UN Secretariat and other international bodies. This situation could already be said to be inimical to the provisions of the Charter, and should be explicitly excluded in a reformed and expanded Security Council.

Madam Chair,

As the Council faces ever more urgent demands for action to tackle severe humanitarian and political crises, we also see repeated failures to respond adequately to these challenges. The case for reform is thus not an academic or institutional question - it is a deeper question of legitimacy and effectiveness. We hope that your efforts will encourage all Member States to reach agreement on a necessary reform which will be of immense benefit to the global community.

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