

SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM

Since the last amendment of the Charter of the United Nations in 1963, which increased the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council, world realities have continued to change. Adapting the Security Council's structure and working methods to these realities is an urgent priority.

Any reform of the Security Council should have as its objective the establishment of a more democratic, more equitably representative, more transparent, more effective and more accountable Council, one which respects the diversity and pluralism of the contemporary international community. Such a reform would need to pay particular attention to the substantial increase in the number of developing countries within the UN membership since the last expansion of the Security Council, as well as the legitimate interests of small and medium size States to serve on the Council.

The preservation of the democratic principle lies at the heart of the legitimacy of any reform of the Security Council. The discipline of regular elections is irreplaceable in ensuring an accountable, accessible Security Council, one in which membership is earned as a privileged responsibility, not granted as a permanent right. Only an expansion in the number of elected seats can ensure the preservation of that democratic principle, through it the authority of the General Assembly, and ultimately the long term legitimacy of reform.

The subject of Security Council reform is one of the most contentious issues. The review conference envisaged by Article 109 of the Charter of the United Nations never materialized. In the 63 years of its existence, there has been only one successful attempt to change the composition of the Council. The current reform process has been going on for the last 14 years without reaching any agreement. Therefore it is extremely important that the reform of the Security Council must be comprehensive that includes increasing the size of the membership and improving the working methods.

I. CATEGORIES, TERMS and MANDATE

Additional seats

(the exact number of seats will depend on the total size of the expansion and the distribution of those seats to various regions, taking into account the equitable geographical distribution)

Longer term seats

- seats allocated to the regional groups, as follows:

Africa

Asia

Asia/Africa (on rotational basis)

GRULAC

WEOG/EEG (on rotational basis)

Alternative options for duration of terms:

- i) 3 to 5 years without possibility of immediate re-election

or

ii) 2 years with possibility of up to two immediate re-elections. To be eligible to run afresh, Member States will have to give a break equivalent to the consecutive period served on the Council.

Regular non permanent seats

- seats for a two year term without possibility of immediate re-election, as follows:

Small States¹

Medium Size States²

Africa

Asia

GRULAC

EEG

Arrangements for representation on the seats, including re-election and rotation, should be decided by the respective regional groups.

¹ population below 1 million, i.e. 42 countries, of which 37 were never elected to the Security Council. Of the 37 never elected: 4 from Africa; 11 from GRULAC; 15 from ASIA; 1 from EEG; 6 from WEOG

² population between 1 and 10 million; i.e. 71 countries, of which 27 were never elected to the Security Council

II. MAJORITY REQUIRED FOR SECURITY COUNCIL DECISIONS AND THE QUESTION OF THE VETO

- Majority required for adoption of substantive decisions in an enlarged Security Council in accordance with Article 27 of the Charter of the United Nations:

present ratio, i.e. 3/5 (60%) of the total SC membership
or a greater ratio

- Options on the question of the veto:
 - abolition of the veto
 - limitations of the scope of the veto, inter alia application of the veto only on Chapter VII matters

III. WORKING METHODS AND PROCEDURES

i) Enhance transparency in the work of the Security Council, including through:

- Better access to information through open briefings
- Holding of Security Council meetings in an open format and keeping to a minimum closed meetings and informal consultations as the exception they were meant to be
- Timely availability to non Council members of draft resolutions and Presidential statements
- Frequent, timely and qualitative briefings for non Council members on the matters discussed in Security Council informal consultations and in the Subsidiary bodies

ii) Enhance access and participation of non members of the Security Council in the work of the Council, including through:

- Full and more vigorous implementation of Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter of the United Nations in the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies
- Interaction of the Council with all interested and concerned parties particularly in the decision making process
- Timely decision on the format of meetings to allow the membership enough preparation
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure that views and interests of Member States affected or concerned by any matter on the agenda including troop contributing countries and host countries, are heard and taken into account
- Expansion of consultation and cooperation of the Council with regional organizations and countries in the region concerned

iii) Adoption of formal rules of procedure of the Security Council, after appropriate consultation with the general membership.

iv) Review of the implementation of decisions of the Security Council.

IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Enhance accountability of the Security Council to the general membership
- Submission of substantive and analytical annual reports and, when necessary, of special reports of the Council to the General Assembly, pursuant to Articles 15 (1) and 24 (3) of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Strengthening the inter-relationship among the Security Council and other UN principal organs, including through regular and institutionalized consultations, cooperation and adequate exchange of information

V. REVIEW MECHANISM

- Review after 10 to 12 years or 15 to 16 years, taking into account the terms for the seats
- comprehensive reassessment, including the composition and working methods of the Council