



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
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Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Thomas Matussek
Permanent Representative of Germany**

in the

**Open-ended Working Group
on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase
in the Membership of the Security Council
and Other Matters Related to the Security Council**

10 April 2008

(Check against delivery)

Mr. President,

let me thank you for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank you for your introductory remarks with your intentions for future procedure, which were interesting and partly new for us.

Mr. President,

in December 2007 you asked the Member States to prepare a text suitable to serve as a basis for intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

Following your request, we took the liberty to invite Member States from all stakeholder groups and from all regions to form what you called at the time an overarching group – later called the overarching process. In many meetings, luncheons and working dinners in the course of the past three months we intensively discussed the way forward.

It was an open, transparent and inclusive endeavor. Member States involved went to work with strong determination, with earnest commitment and inexhaustible energy in order to achieve the result that our distinguished friend and colleague Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis of Cyprus presented to you.

I would like to seize the opportunity to cordially thank Andreas for so expertly, wisely and successfully guiding the overarching process in its difficult task. My sincere thanks also go to all the colleagues who volunteered to participate in a drafting group – John Sawers, Hamidan Ali, Mihnea Motoc and Frank Majoor – and to all of you who joined meetings of the overarching process. All of these Member States – among them members of the P5, the S5, the G4, the African Group and Uniting for Consensus – provided invaluable contributions to the final result of this endeavor – the text proposal that is before you.

Mr. President,

the overarching process is also significant in another way – beyond the text it has produced. It shows the will to move forward, to negotiate with a view to achieving a clear cut result now – and not in the distant future. This political will is shared by a huge majority of the membership across the board, from all regions and all groupings.

Mr. President,

the task you asked the Member States to perform – to produce a basis for intergovernmental negotiations – is now accomplished.

Before us we now have a single document clearly indicating the negotiables for the intergovernmental negotiations. Now, without further ado, we have to get to work and negotiate.

Before us we have the bricks that we will need to build a reformed Security Council. And just like in the construction business it is not discernible from the pile of bricks that we see at the construction site what the house will look like in the end. In the same way, the text proposal is not the end result, it is rather the point of departure for intergovernmental negotiations. Some of the bricks might not be used in the end, others might be added during the construction process. In any case, a lot of demanding work lies ahead of us before the house will be ready.

In other words: The text which we have in front of us contains almost all options presented over the past years by Member States: UfC positions as well as G4 proposals, intermediate approaches as well as permanent solutions are as clearly reflected as African positions and working methods.

As Ambassador Mavroyiannis pointed out in his letter, Member States of course have the right to pursue their original positions in the negotiation process.

Mr. President,

the foundations of our house will be – and here I quote from the General Assembly decision of September 17, 2007 – “the progress achieved so far, particularly at the 61st session, as well as the positions of and proposals made by Member States”. For such a house, it does not only take bricks, we also need experienced and able builders. And we are pleased to note that these builders are available too, ready to get to work: An overwhelming majority of member states has expressed their readiness to embark upon a negotiation process without delay. We have learned with delight and gratitude that our African friends at their summit in Addis have declared their readiness to negotiate.

In my view, there is no need for any more preparatory work. The issue has been on the agenda of the GA since 1979. We should and we can move on to intergovernmental negotiations without delay and with the clear determination of achieving results, as decided by the General Assembly on September 17, 2007, and not just one more report. This decision of the General Assembly remains the decisive guideline for the work of the Open-ended Working Group. By the end of this General Assembly, every single day counts. We must not drag our feet now. To start in May or early June would definitely be too late.

Mr. President,

when you kick off the negotiation process and ask your task force to start this process together with member states, you can fully count on our support.

Mr. President,

against many odds, we have come quite a long way together in the past months: Last September, the General Assembly decided to start negotiations this session. You then asked the membership to draft a text basis for those negotiations. This text basis is now on the table.

We now invite Member States to join us in negotiations to build on the work done so far, in order to achieve the widest possible agreement on concrete results.

We are optimistic that together we can master this challenge. We all agree, and we all declared many times that the reform of the Security Council remains urgent and remains necessary. The time has come now to get to work to make the reform happen.

Thank you.