



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RODRIGO MALMIERCA DIAZ,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA, AT THE MEETING OF 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. New York, 10 April 2008**

Mr. President,

I would like to welcome, on behalf of the Cuban delegation, the convening of this new meeting of the Working Group to follow up on the debates on the best way to carry out the necessary reform of the Security Council. We appreciate your intention to keep this important item as one of the main priorities of the 62nd session, as well as your endeavor to achieve concrete results during your mandate. As always, we assure you of my delegation's full cooperation.

We are convinced that there cannot be a true reform of the UN unless the Security Council is first reformed. The reform of the Council cannot continue to be, as it has been so far, a postponed and relegated objective, for it is part and parcel of the reform of the UN as a whole.

The fruitful debate that this Working Group carried out during last December, as in previous months, has provided us with a better idea of the situation we are facing. We believe we are arriving at the beginning of a comprehensive, inclusive, open and transparent intergovernmental negotiation process, with broad participation of all Member States of the United Nations, without any kind of discrimination.

Cuba is ready to work in a pragmatic manner and to be as flexible as possible, yet without sacrificing key elements. We recall that in order to make progress, we must all be flexible; not just a few countries.

These negotiations shall take into account not only the latest proposals, but all those made throughout the 14 years of this Group's works, particularly those made by NAM.

Mr. President,

The reform process of the Security Council must be based on a full and comprehensive approach, which addresses both matters related to that organ's expansion and its work methods. These questions must not be artificially separated or address in a fragmented manner, since they are tightly interrelated.

We have on the table the possibility to advance the reform process on the basis of a so-called transitory approach, with the aim of taking junctural measures on question wherein no insurmountable differences are observed, leaving the most controversial ones for a further phase wherein a general review of the entire process will be carried out, which shall be compulsory and in a determined date.

We reiterate our concern at possible erroneous interpretation that could be aimed at showing these transitory measures as a "reform of the Council" deferring other claims and proposals for the Greek Calends. It is truly necessary to reach a definition on the time that this transition period should last, as well as the dates and content of the general review to be carried out later.

Cuba would not favor the creation of new categories or intermediate categories. We reiterate that the expansion of the Security Council should be carried out both in the category of permanent members and the non-permanent. It is pressing to rectify the insufficient representation of Third World countries in this organ. We could not support any partial or selective expansion of the Council in detriment of developing countries.

We must endeavor to achieve true equitable geographical representation of Member States of the Security Council. We reiterate our strong support to the just demands of the developing countries, especially those made by the African Group.

The new members of the expanded Council shall have exactly the same duties and prerogatives of the current members. Cuba would not oppose the possibility of immediate reelection of non-permanent members.

Some of the ideas included in the Reports prepared by the Facilitators last year on reforms of the working methods are interesting. However, we consider that they do not address in full the genuine concerns conveyed by Member States. We believe they are still insufficient.

The reform of the working methods must be part and parcel of the reform of the Security Council. We are convinced about its close link to the issue of expansion and the veto.

We agree with the opinion of the vast majority; the reform of the Council cannot be limited to the increase of the number of members, but it should also comprehend a true and thorough transformation process that guarantees the institutional transparency of its works, in the decision-making process and the return to its functions under the UN Charter. To reform the working methods, among other urgent steps, we could start by adopting the Rules of Procedure, which after more than 60 years, continue to be provisional.

The Security Council's function under the Charter is to ensure the keeping of international peace and security, yet this interpretation reaches dangerously other areas. The Council's work seems to increasingly separate from the Assembly's and other principal organs' work. The encroachment of the Council

in issues that clearly compete to the Assembly, ECOSOC and other organs is a widely known fact. We must act urgently to bring these harmful trends to a halt.

Our views with regard to the right to veto are well known. It is not possible to review the question of member categories without addressing the issue of the veto.

All the indications are that, despite the majority's claim, the elimination of the veto continues to be unviable at the moment and it does not seem to be possible in the near future, all the more reason to work towards its elimination.

In this regard, Cuba reiterates its full support of the principled positions of NAM on these issues, included in different documents adopted in Ministerial meetings and Summit Conferences, including at the 14th Summit, held in Havana in September 2006.

Mr. President;

We all recognize that we are faced with an extremely complex and sensitive issue. To achieve a true reform of the Council, the cooperation of all is paramount.

I would like to conclude, Mr. President, by reiterating Cuba's willingness to participate and contribute in an active manner, with concrete proposals in the next phases of our works.

Thank you.