



PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR VANU GOPALA MENON
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON BEHALF OF THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE GROUP (3G)
AT THE MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP
TO FOLLOW UP ON THE CONFERENCE LAST JUNE OF THE WORLD
FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON
DEVELOPMENT**

**“STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF THE UN IN GLOBAL ECONOMIC
GOVERNANCE”**

2 JUNE 2010

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- I am making this statement on behalf of the informal Global Governance Group (3G), comprising the following Member States of the United Nations, viz the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, the State of Kuwait, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Malaysia, the Principality of Monaco, New Zealand, Panama, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Qatar, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of San Marino, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Singapore, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay
 - The global economic crisis has underscored the need for more effective global governance mechanisms for policy coordination and international cooperation. In this context, the G-20 has taken on an active role in catalysing global actions in response to the financial crisis since November 2008.
 - However, the actions and decisions of the G-20 have implications beyond its membership. Many Member States have felt some impact from such decisions. Unlike the UN, where we all have a voice, the G-20 process is closed. This has understandably given rise to some concerns from the UN membership.

- It was against this background that a number of us from small and medium-sized states came together in the hope of developing a constructive dialogue on coordination and cooperation between G-20 and non G-20 members. The informal Global Governance Group, also known as the 3G, has had several informal meetings at the PR-level. The group also met informally at the Foreign Ministers level in New York in September 2009 and in Davos in January 2010.
- The 3G had also shared its views with UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Ban Ki-moon prior to his departure for the Pittsburgh Summit, and with the hosts of the next G-20 Summits, Canada and South Korea. More recently, the group had a frank exchange with the UNSG and several G-20 members on the role of the UN vis-à-vis the G-20 process. We will also be convening more outreach meetings.
- While the 3G has been supportive of the G-20 process, we see room for improvement. We firmly believe that the G-20 process should enhance and not undermine the UN. All countries, big and small, will be affected by how the G-20 deals with the issues it takes under its charge. Given the complexities and interdependencies of the global economy, it is important for the G-20 to be consultative, inclusive and transparent in its deliberations for its outcome to be effectively implemented on a global scale. In this regard, the 3G has raised several ideas on how to improve the engagement between the G-20 and the UN.
- First, the G-20 should undertake consultations as widely as possible with non G-20 members before the G-20 Summits through regular and predictable channels. By doing this, all states, especially smaller states which comprise the majority of UN members, will have a critical opportunity to raise issues of concern to them. The hosts of the G-20 Summits should also provide the rest of the UN membership with an update after the meetings
- Second, the participation of the UNSG and his Sherpa at the G20 Summits and preparatory meetings respectively should be formalised. While the UNSG cannot represent our national positions, he is able to convey the broad sense of the membership. In this regard, we are heartened by Canada's decision to invite the UNSG and his Sherpa to the Toronto G-20 Summit and the related G-20 preparatory meetings. It is important that their participation in the G-20 process is formalised.

- Third, while the 3G welcomes Canada's decision to include the Chairs of some regional organizations in the Toronto Summit, the participation of these and other established regional organizations in G-20 Summits should be regularized.
- Fourth, in some cases, regional groupings alone will not adequately represent the national interests of small and medium-sized states. As such, the G-20 decision-making process should take on a “variable geometry” configuration to allow non G-20 states to participate in Ministerial gatherings and other working groups involving senior officials/experts on specialised issues. This will ensure that deliberations on key issues of global concern engage all the relevant parties.
- Most of these ideas have been encapsulated in a 3G paper entitled, “Strengthening the Framework for G-20 Engagement of Non-members”, and circulated as a UN document (reference number A/64/706 dated 11 March 2010).
- The UN is the only global body with universal participation and unquestioned legitimacy. The UN also has a global reach with its wide array of operational agencies on the ground. At the same time, for the UN to remain at the forefront of any discussion on global governance, it must continue to take steps to become more effective and nimble to face global challenges. In the event that we, the Member States, are unable to reach agreement on important issues of the day, we run the real risk of the UN having no voice on these issues and, worse still, disenfranchising itself in the global debate on issues of vital importance to all states. This would have negative implications for all of us.



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Letter dated 11 March 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you on behalf of the informal Global Governance Group (3G), comprising the following States Members of the United Nations: the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the Kingdom of Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Malaysia, the Principality of Monaco, New Zealand, Panama, the Republic of the Philippines, the State of Qatar, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of San Marino, the Republic of Senegal, the Republic of Singapore, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay, a document entitled, "Strengthening the Framework for G-20 Engagement of Non-Members" (see annex)

On behalf of the 3G, I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Vanu Gopala Menon
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 11 March 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Strengthening the Framework for G-20 Engagement of Non-members

1. The global economic crisis has underscored the need for more effective global governance mechanisms for economic policy coordination. The G-20 represents a significant step in that regard. The G-20 process and the swift, decisive actions that it brought about helped to avert a global economic depression in the last year. For the G-20's deliberations to be translated into effective actions on a global scale, they will need to be more consultative, inclusive and transparent. This will require the development of appropriate mechanisms to engage and consult a wider range of countries.

2. In this regard, the informal Global Governance Group (3G)¹ would like to propose the following approach for strengthening the framework of engagement between the G-20 and non-G-20 members:

- The United Nations is the only global body with universal participation and unquestioned legitimacy. The G-20 process should recognize and reflect this reality. The G-20 process and its actions and decisions should complement and strengthen the United Nations.
- It is important that the G-20 engages with the United Nations and its Member States through predictable and regular channels, including consultations with the wider membership before G-20 Summits. This will allow all States, especially smaller States, which constitute the majority of United Nations Members, to raise issues of concern to them and have their voices heard. In addition, the hosts of the G-20 Summits should provide the rest of the United Nations membership with an update after the meetings.
- The participation of the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Sherpa at G-20 Summits and preparatory meetings, respectively, should be formalized. While the Secretary-General cannot represent our individual national positions, he is nevertheless in a position to convey the broad sense of the membership.
- There should be sufficient flexibility in the G-20 process to provide for the participation of non-G-20 members in discussions on specialized issues. It could take on a "variable geometry" configuration to allow non-G-20 States to participate in Ministerial gatherings and other working groups involving senior officials/experts on issues of specific concern to them. Variable geometry has been practised in many multilateral settings and the 3G subscribes to it in its approach.

¹ Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Kingdom of Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, Principality of Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Principality of Monaco, New Zealand, Panama, Republic of the Philippines, State of Qatar, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of San Marino, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Singapore, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay

- While we applaud the inclusion of some regional organizations (e.g., APEC, ASEAN, AU Commission, EU, NEPAD) in the last two G-20 Summits, the participation of these and other established regional organizations in future G-20 Summits should be regularized. These regional organizations should fully participate in the G-20 and its associated processes.

3. The 3G believes that the above approach would bring greater transparency and inclusivity to the G-20 process, which in turn would strengthen the process and build wider support for G-20 actions
