

Statement by
H.E. HILARIO G. DAVIDE, JR.
Permanent Representative, Republic of the Philippines

Informal Thematic Debate of the General Assembly on
“Toward a common understanding on management reform”
New York, 08 April 2008

Mr. President,

My delegation's profound appreciation goes to you Mr. President for convening the General Assembly for this informal thematic debate on Management Reform. Midway into your watch, you have already accomplished much in terms of demonstration of political will to pursue reform initiatives in the U.N. No one among us – and perhaps even among those before us – believes that these reforms are not needed. Thus we congratulate you Mr. President for your dynamism, courage and determination. Forthwith, my delegation pledges and commits its full support to your endeavors.

Undoubtedly, management is one area which needs reform. When the founding fathers of the U.N. signed the U.N. Charter, they were fully aware that keeping alive the preamble and achieving the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter presuppose and require an on-going process and dynamic growth. They never believed that the U.N. would exist in a vacuum. My delegation is aware that some reforms would be extremely difficult to achieve. But there are many which can be instituted or put in place within a reasonable time if there is a political will to do so.

Some of the doable management reforms relates to reform of the Secretariat to make it more effective and efficient and accountable in light of the increase in the membership of the U.N., the changing times and the complexities of global problems. My delegation supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to reform the Secretariat. A re-engineering is necessary. Change management is the key.

Mr. President,

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Antigua and Barbuda speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the same time, we would like to underscore the following points:

First, the plenary jurisdiction of the General Assembly to review, revise, change or terminate its legislative mandates should not be infringed. Mandates created by consensual decisions can only be altered or ended by them.

Second, full information and adherence to a transparent, open and all-inclusive process in the establishment, review, amendment or termination of mandates are

conditions sine qua non to the exercise to facilitate the formulation of informed decisions that ensure accountability, transparency and fairness.

Third, the Organization should put a premium on sound program planning in budget preparation. This exercise would help present a comprehensive picture of mandated activities along with accompanying resources to aid Member States in determining resource requirements for priority activities.

Fourth, management of the Organization's human resources, the real assets of the United Nations, should be given top priority because they carry out the instructions of the Member States. Efforts to address the concerns of its personnel, particularly the staff, should likewise be addressed.

Fifth, the end goal in all these reforms is not only good governance, but an authentically effective good governance whose main pillars are accountability, transparency and responsiveness and which ensures utmost fidelity to the principles of equality among Member States.

Finally, given that the Organization has to keep up with a rapidly changing world, Member States should endeavor to reach and achieve agreement on reform issues where they can without any further delay and take up later issues where we cannot decide now. As they say, if you want change, there is no time like the present. Apropos to this let me quote an excerpt from a poem:

*Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower,
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind.*

Thank you.