



په ملگرو ملتوکی  
د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوریت  
دایمی نمایندگی - نیویارک

نماینده گی دایمی  
جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان  
در ملل متحد - نیویارک

**Permanent Mission of the Islamic  
Republic Afghanistan to the  
United Nations**

2 March 2009

Excellency,

In strict conformity with the Work Plan elaborated by the President of the General Assembly and embraced by Member States during our successful 19 February launch of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform, I am herewith providing guidance to Member States on the path to decisive progress. Starting on 4 March, the membership will within two months conduct the first round of the Intergovernmental Negotiations in a comprehensive fashion along the lines of the five key issues as enumerated in GA Decision 62/557. During the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, the membership addressed Security Council reform along such lines, be it at an entirely different stage of the process and in an entirely different forum. Given our common purpose to, in an open process, build on rather than repeat, *inter alia*, the outcome of that previous exercise, let me for your convenience recite this outcome as far as categories of membership, the key issue to be dealt with on 4 March, is concerned, through an excerpt from document A/61/47, defined in subparagraph iii of paragraph e of Decision 62/557 as part of the basis for the Intergovernmental Negotiations:

**"Categories of membership**

The issue of categories of membership proved to be one of the key issues in the entire process. One of the main purposes of the facilitation was to explore whether innovative ideas heard during consultations could help to reconcile existing positions, with a view of advancing the process. The following views were expressed during consultations:

- A large group of States continued to call for the enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership (permanent and non-permanent seats).
- A group of States, while defending an enlargement of the Security Council in both categories, is proposing that any new permanent seats holders enjoy all prerogatives of permanent members, including the veto right in the event that it is maintained.
- Another group of States reiterated its position of seeking the creation of a category of membership that is of a permanent character but, at least initially, without exercising the veto. Addition of new non-permanent seats is also proposed by this group.
- A group of States reiterated its position of accepting enlargement only in the category of non-permanent seats, while considering that no initial positions should be pre-empted for any future discussions of the issue. The creation of only



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non-permanent seats is also considered by a group of States as a possible fallback position in case no other satisfactory solution is found.

- Some Member States encouraged the exploration of a sort of an “interim” or “transitional solution” based on a longer-term renewability of seats. Likewise, other Member States expressed their readiness to explore a solution that would move the process ahead while enjoying broad acceptance.
- Some delegations, especially from small States, expressed the view that any solution should enhance their aspiration to serve on the Security Council.
- A large number of delegations expressed the view that in any expansion there is a need for ensuring a strengthened representation of developing countries and small States. A number of delegations stressed the need to take into account the wide cultural diversity within the international community.
- Some delegations expressed their wish to have the question of categories and the other issue-areas ascertained through a “questionnaire” addressed to Member States.
- The notion of accountability, both at the time of election (Article 23.2 of the Charter of the United Nations) and while serving in the Council (Article 24.2 of the Charter) has been addressed by delegations in relation with categories of membership:
  - A group belonging to a specific region is of the view that that region would be responsible for the selection of its representative States in an enlarged Council, which would be accountable to it.
  - Other Member States expressed the view that accountability could be ensured through a process of “challenge” within a review mechanism.

Signals of flexibility were shown during the consultations: despite the reiteration of initial positions, readiness for some flexibility was expressed by the main groups, especially on the question of permanency:

- Delegations defending permanency would accept to submit the status of any new permanent seats to challenge.
- Delegations contesting permanency would admit the possibility for a number of States to be members of the Council for a longer period of time than that initially envisaged in the Charter.
- Members of a group of States, although remaining firm in their initial positions, expressed readiness to refer any new proposed elements regarding Security Council reform to their highest political authorities at the earliest possible opportunity.”



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The above excerpt from document A/61/47 should of course also be read in conjunction with, in particular, the new inputs and reaffirmed views as contained in document A/62/47, similarly defined in subparagraph iii of paragraph e of Decision 62/557 as part of the basis for the Intergovernmental Negotiations. Through his Work Plan, the President of the General Assembly has exhorted Member States to flesh out the substantive underpinning of the meetings, defined in subparagraphs i and iii of paragraph e of Decision 62/557, and to show the necessary flexibility. That is to say filling in any as of yet missing details of your position of first preference on the key issue under discussion, categories of membership in the case of our 4 March meeting, as well as sketching the contours of your position of second preference, should the former prove unrealizable in full at this stage. In that regard, I welcome recent and future new proposals and invite delegations to highlight the aspects of their proposals which relate to the key issue under discussion.

By giving off signals of flexibility, Member States can inject new life blood into the Intergovernmental Negotiations, which I strive to set up so as to facilitate a productive exchange among Member States. To that end, I encourage Member States to in their interventions react to and reciprocate the flexibility shown by their peers, and I am prepared to give delegations the floor for a second time, particularly in case the speaking order has prevented them from reacting and reciprocating at their first opportunity to speak. To make this interaction possible, Member States are urged to be concise and to limit their interventions to no longer than three minutes.

I am confident that the good faith and mutual respect in full display over the course of our 19 February meeting will take us very far very fast. For my part, as Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, I will continue to facilitate the achievement of decisive progress, inter alia by having a similar letter precede each meeting on each individual key issue. As I already stated in my 19 February closing remarks, the treatment of each individual key issue could go on for more than a day, without however disrupting the time schedule as laid out in the President's Work Plan. Also in strict conformity with that plan, I will provide Member States with an overview after they finish the first round before the end of April. This comprehensive paper will then serve as a point of departure for the second round immediately thereafter, during which Member States can close in on compromise.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration,

Zahir Tanin,  
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations,  
Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the question of equitable representation  
and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the  
Council