

19 July 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,  
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,  
at the 9<sup>th</sup> Informal 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**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we meet to discuss the “Report to the President of the General Assembly on the consultations regarding the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council,” prepared by the Permanent Representative of Chile, Ambassador Heraldo Muñoz, and the Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein, Ambassador Christian Wenaweser, which I transmitted to the membership on 26 June 2007.

I once again wish to thank the two Ambassadors for the dedicated manner in which they have conducted this new phase of consultations on Security Council reform.

They have performed their work pursuant to the mandate I gave them in my letter of 22 May 2007, to conduct consultations with the membership, on the basis of the five Facilitators’ report of 19 May 2007, on how to move Security Council reform process forward; and to report back to me on the outcome of these consultations before the end of June 2007.

Building upon the five Facilitators’ report, the present report is intended to assist Member States, if they so choose, in further consideration of an intermediary approach. As I stated in my transmittal letter of 26 June 2007, this report is complementary to the five Facilitators’ report of 19 April 2007, and the two documents should be read together.

Therefore, while focusing on the elements contained in the report of 26 June, I would like to invite Member States to take the opportunity of today’s debate to reflect on the progress achieved, on the important question of Security Council reform.

Excellencies,

Today we debate one of the most important reform issues before the United Nations. The responsibilities entrusted to the Security Council by the Charter are vital for world peace and security. Although the prevailing view among the membership continues to be that the status quo

is not acceptable, we have yet to fulfill the commitment to Security Council reform which all States made at the 2005 World Summit.

I have throughout this session urged the membership to look at this matter with a fresh and open mind so that we can make substantial progress.

Against this background and taking into account the comprehensiveness of the reform process, I proposed to focus our consultations on the key issues of size, categories of membership, regional representation, veto and the working methods of the Security Council and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

This has allowed us to undertake an in-depth review of the views of the membership in all aspects of Security Council reform, through an open, inclusive and transparent process of consultations.

I wish to thank all Member States for the spirit of cooperation and understanding they have demonstrated throughout this process.

The positive atmosphere that has prevailed demonstrates that it is only through dialogue that Member States can reach general agreement to reform the Council, to make it more representative, efficient and increase the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions.

Excellencies,

Looking back at the years since the General Assembly started actively discussing Security Council reform, in the framework of the Open-ended Working Group, we have to acknowledge that much remains to be done.

Earlier efforts initiated by specific groups of States have not been conclusive. Indeed, although a number of draft resolutions were previously tabled, their sponsors did not call for action by the General Assembly thereon.

This alone is a reflection of the extent of the diverging views of the membership on Security Council reform. It also emphasizes the need to strive to narrow the differences in order to reach general agreement.

As you are aware, an affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly will be required to adopt any resolution or decision on the question of Security Council reform.

Excellencies,

The report before us today and the five Facilitators' report are highly commendable. These reports represent the product of open, transparent and inclusive consultations processes involving all Member States.

The report under consideration today puts forward “Notions for discussion” to assist Member States to further explore an intermediary approach, if they so wish. It also suggests a number of steps which, if carefully considered, could help moving the reform process ahead.

In particular, the report notes that “Delegations expressed the view that instead of further consultations, the next stage should consist of negotiations.”

However, for a meaningful intergovernmental negotiation process to begin there should, first and foremost, be a clear willingness to enter in such a process from all interest groups. Only then would we need clarity on what kind of document such negotiations could be based upon.

It is my considered view, that the report under consideration can enable us to take a further step forward, but that it is neither intended nor suitable to serve as a basis for negotiations. In short, to be fruitful any negotiations process would require strong ownership by the membership.

Our discussions today should build upon our deliberations in May on the five Facilitators’ report so as to indicate the level of our common understanding on the ideas put forward in the reports. I believe that your opinions are important in order to consider the options for moving the Security Council reform process forward.

At this informal meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, I wish to hear your comments and views on the practical steps you may deem appropriate to undertake in this regard.

To conclude, allow me, once again, to extend my most sincere thanks to the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Frank Majoor; the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, Ambassador Ali Hachani; the Permanent Representative of Cyprus, Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis; and, the Permanent Representative of Croatia, Ambassador Mirjana Mladineo for their essential contribution to our common endeavor to achieve a meaningful Security Council reform.

I trust we will continue to work together on this important issue of Security Council reform for the rest of this session and beyond in a spirit of dialogue and cooperation.