

14 November 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Tokyo Dialogue on Security Council Reform**

His Excellency Koji Tsuruoka, Deputy Vice-Minister of Japan,
Honorable Deputy Foreign Ministers,
Distinguished Ambassadors,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me from the outset to thank the Government of Japan for hosting an informal dialogue on Security Council reform.

Reforming the Security Council lies at the heart of the broader process to reform and revitalize the United Nations.

As President of the General Assembly, UN reform and revitalization is one of my four pillars this year, and I am therefore honoured to participate in today's discussion.

Meeting here today, I am certain that we come with one goal in mind: to achieve real progress in this much-needed reform.

For almost two decades, there has been serious discussion within the United Nations' halls on how to reform the council. Today more than ever, I can confidently state that:

There is a clear consensus within the international community on the need for our Organization and, in particular, the Security Council, to adapt to the international changes since 1945.

Timely reform is urgent if the United Nations is to respond to 21st Century realities.

History has shown that international organizations face their greatest challenges when they fail to respond to dynamic changing environments.

Having followed this discussion for 13 years as an Ambassador to the United Nations, I realize that we have invested serious time discussing the different theoretical foundations linked to this process.

Consequently, different models for reform have emerged, reflecting the views of various groups.

However, the speed of actual steps towards reform does not appear to match these increasing calls.

This view has raised several questions and observations that I would like to share with you in our informal meeting today:

First:

Is it necessary to move now? Do we need Security Council reform, taking into consideration the aforementioned reasons?

My answer is a very clear yes.

It is my view that this process should attain real progress in a timely manner, and be fully driven and defined by the Member States.

Secondly:

What will the situation be if we achieve no progress? In this case, could the United Nations and the international community bear the consequences?

My answer is no.

The legitimacy of the United Nations' mission could be undermined in the absence of an efficient, inclusive and representative Security Council.

Thirdly:

Can anyone proceed alone with regard to Security Council reform?

Again, the answer is no.

After years of long debate in the General Assembly, whether formally or informally, at the bilateral level or in the wider context of the UN Membership, actual progress requires the collective will of the wider membership.

For this reason, I emphasized at the relevant General Assembly discussions on the 8TH of November, the need to engage in constructive discussions on the issue of reform, with patience and a spirit of compromise. In doing so, we will maximize our opportunities for progress.

And fourthly:

What should a possible proposal for Security Council reform look like?

My answer would be a proposal that emerges from a Member State driven process and that clearly garners the broadest possible acceptance by Member States, in the manner defined in the General Assembly Decision 62/557.

I believe that our efforts to reform the Council should chart its course between realism and idealism. I would support any approach that enjoys the widest political acceptance among the UN Membership.

Excellencies,

I believe that the primary responsibility for realizing our aspiration to reform the Security Council lies with the Member States.

The chances for our success will be maximized by our collective will, and by putting to good use the points of agreement reached during the intergovernmental negotiations. Let us act sincerely to crystallize these areas of convergence and accord.

In supporting our work to attain timely progress, I look to the Chair of the Intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Ambassador Tannin.

I fully support Ambassador Tannin's endeavors, which is why from the first day of my Presidency, I have emphasized my confidence in his leadership. I look forward to your support to him as well.

And finally, I sincerely encourage you, distinguished guests, to fully engage in the relevant discussions with flexibility, effectiveness and openness.

I hope that our informal discussions today will contribute meaningfully to the reform process.

It is this spirit of flexibility and compromise that will make it possible to achieve the desired progress, in a manner that harvests the widest range of political support among Member States.

I wish you every success.

Thank you.