



# **The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations**

**Statement by  
Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson  
Permanent Representative of Iceland  
to the United Nations**

**on behalf of the Nordic Countries  
Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden  
in 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**

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**Iceland**

**First time candidate to the  
Security Council 2009-2010**

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this important meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group. I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the five Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

The Nordic countries see Security Council reform as an essential element of the comprehensive reform of the UN, initiated by our political leaders in 2005. Progress has been made in other areas of overall UN reform, but Security Council reform has not advanced. In order to strengthen the credibility and legitimacy of the UN system in general, we need to proceed on this part of the reform process as well.

We believe it is important to build on the discussions over the past year on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The two reports of your predecessor offer valuable ideas for the way ahead: Now is the time to bring the discussion forward with the aim of reaching a solution. We support you, Mr. President, in your efforts to facilitate this process.

Our objective remains to find solutions that will bolster the legitimacy of the Council and enhance respect for and compliance with its decisions, while at the same time maintaining the Council as an effective forum for decision-making.

As previously stated, we are open to the idea of an enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent category.

In order to go forward, we are ready to assess interim solutions that would allow testing various models as long as they contain a clear review-clause.

We strongly believe that the veto power should not be extended and would like to see a veto free culture be promoted in the Council.

Improved representativity of the Council should primarily be obtained by adding additional members, so that it would better represent our world community. Moreover, it is in our view essential that any Security Council reform preserves the possibility of small states – which is the majority of states in this hall – to serve on the Council.

Finally, any reform would be incomplete without reform of the Council's working methods and procedures with a view to making the work of the Council more transparent, inclusive and participatory. For small member states, who inevitably find themselves outside the Council for decades, improving accessibility of the Councils work remains a vital element of reform.

Mr. President,

As we enter the process of intergovernmental negotiations, we all need to have an open mind, show flexibility and be ready to discuss new ideas. The Nordic countries, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, will continue to engage actively in a constructive dialogue, and we stand ready to take the next step under your able guidance.

I thank you Mr. President.