



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY MR. RODOLFO BENÍTEZ VERNON, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I. OF CUBA,
AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE REFORM OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL. NEW YORK, 19 JULY 2007**

Madame President:

Cuba wishes to express its recognition of the efforts you have made to advance the work of this Group in a creative manner. We also wish to thank you for the commitment you have shown with the Security Council reform.

Likewise, we congratulate the five and the two Facilitators respectively for the transparent and inclusive manner they have conducted their consultations.

Without a doubt, today we all have a clearer idea of where we are right now. Thus, our priority should be determining the course of action to follow over the next few months.

The Security Council reform cannot continue to be an objective that is always postponed or relegated. The reform of the Security Council is an integral part of the overall United Nations reform process. There cannot exist a real reform of the United Nations until the Security Council is reformed. The clamor of the overwhelming majority cannot continue to be ignored.

Cuba stands ready to work pragmatically and be as flexible as possible without sacrificing key elements and principles positions. However, flexibility should be shown across the board, not only by some.

In charting the course of action we shall pursue from now on, we must be very cautious both in form and in substance. At this stage, we cannot afford a *faux pas* causing a future negative impact on the Security Council reform process.

Madame President:

Cuba has carefully studied the proposals contained in the reports presented by the Facilitators and, in this regards, wishes to make some comments.

In our view, the aforementioned reports reflect a genuine interest on the part of the Facilitators to try to make progress. Above all else, these reports have the merit of encouraging debate on an issue that concerns us all.

For instance, they flag the idea of establishing new categories of Security Council members. As Cuba has said before, we do not favour the creation of new categories of members. Instead of contributing to the better functioning of this organ; new categories could enhance the existing differences and spur division among the members of the Security Council.

The new members of the Security Council, whether they are permanent or not, should enjoy the same rights and powers as current members of this organ, and that includes the veto for the category of permanent members. Cuba would not be opposed to the immediate re-election of non-permanent members.

As for the undemocratic and anachronistic privilege of the veto, Cuba's views are well known as is its conviction that it should be eliminated. However, taking into account that it would not be realistic to achieve this at this point, we believe that the use of the veto should be constrained – as a first step – to those actions adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Madame President:

Cuba favours a broad increase in the membership of the Security Council, with 25 or 26 members. This increase should include both categories of members and developing countries should have the bulk of this number, on the basis of the proposals put forth by the Non-Aligned Movement.

The objective should not be increasing membership for the sake of it, but rather address the unjustifiable under-representation of developing countries in the Council.

The Security Council reform should necessarily also include the reform of its working methods. We deem interesting some of the ideas contained in the Facilitators reports, which are aimed at improving the working methods. Although insufficient, these ideas are in the right direction.

We call for a transparent Security Council, where informal consultations behind closed doors are the exception, rather than the rule. We look forward to a Security Council that considers the issues under its purview, rather than encroaching upon other organs. We want a Security Council that really takes into account the views of the wider membership of the Organization before making decisions, a Security Council that ensures real access to member States, which are not members of this organ.

Madame President:

The consultation process we have undertaken this year proves that there are real possibilities to make progress. However, the expectations created over the last few months could rapidly become further frustration, if there are no concrete gains.

For all the above reasons, Cuba concurs with your assessment that we must move to a higher stage of our work. Consultations have been useful; but sooner rather than later, we should proceed to negotiations. We are convinced the conditions are ripe for that.

Notwithstanding persisting differences, the fundamental elements inherent to the Security Council reform are on the table. We should start an open, transparent and inclusive negotiation process as soon as possible.

We reiterate the full readiness of the Cuban delegation to take part and contribute actively in the work ahead.

I thank you.