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STATEMENT BY

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Ambassador

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to the United Nations**

**QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND
INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
AND RELATED MATTERS**

United Nations General Assembly

NEW YORK, 19 July 2007

Speaking points
Informal Meeting of the OEWG, 19 July 2007

Madame President.

- First, let me express my appreciation for your role in this process. You have succeeded in giving the topic of Security Council reform new impetus. Although we have not yet come to a durable solution, we have indeed made steady progress towards one.
- Second, let me also express my appreciation for the two conductors, ambassadors Munoz and Wenaweser. They were tasked by the President to conduct consultations on the base of the April-report by the 5 facilitators. To that end they have held extensive consultations with the Membership. Their consultations have resulted in an outstanding report, concise but rich in substance.
- The strength of the report is that it faithfully represents the different views among the Membership, but also explores and points at ways and means to move the process forward on the basis of the transitional approach. The report elaborates on some of the variables and negotiables of such an approach, and thus complements the April-report. I commend both conductors for their work and their fresh ideas in this regard.

Madame President.

- Allow me to say a few words on the substance of the report and the process ahead. Over the past few years, the Netherlands has been a staunch supporter of Security Council reform. We have some specific and substantial ideas on the right reform model. But perhaps more important for us, is to see movement. To see the political will to get down to business, and to get down to real negotiations. We cannot afford to lose another 15 years, or so, of open-ended debates. The time has come to finally adapt the Council to the new geopolitical realities, and to give the Council's decisions maximal legitimacy and effectiveness.
- With this in mind, we share the notion, as presented in the two reports, that the various existing proposals are not likely to be realized. We also share the notion that maintaining the status quo is not an option. Following from these notions are two possibilities: trying to find a compromise for a permanent solution, or trying to find agreement on a transitional approach.
- As far as the Netherlands is concerned, we would be comfortable with either approach. However, reality and the experience of many years of debates, tell us that getting a broad majority in the GA for the first option is not very likely. Success seems more likely if we try to agree on a transitional approach. In this approach, no Member State has to give up its original position; no Member State has to forego its original aspirations. It is therefore more likely that Member States are willing to show flexibility.

Madame President,

- It is appropriate that the reports talk about an approach, and not a model. It is not a straight-jacket. On the contrary, the transitional approach leaves open a lot of modalities to be discussed and negotiated. It is not a destination, it is above all an avenue to get us to the destination.
- Most important modality to be negotiated is the precise way in which the mandatory review will take place. There are various modalities there. Obviously, this is a key issue that has to be negotiated between governments.
- As for the contents of the intermediary arrangement itself, there are also many options open for negotiation, as the report by the 2 conductors points out. In possible negotiations on the building blocks of the intermediary arrangement, Member States could in theory still aim for positions that are close to their original positions.
- Having said that, it is my government's belief that the approach does allow for compromises on some of the key, and most controversial, aspects of reform. Starting with 'the feasible' for the intermediary arrangement, and aiming for 'the higher' at the review. For example, it could bring us closer to re-electable, long term seats, with the prospect of permanent seats **at a later stage**. It could bring us closer to a modest expansion in the first instance, with the prospect of a more ambitious one **at a later stage**. And it could bring us closer to limiting the use of the veto, with the prospect of more fundamental veto reforms **at a later stage**.

Madame President,

- Finally, some words on the process ahead of us. We do believe it that the transitional approach is an option with some chance of success. Therefore, we hope that this approach could be further explored in negotiations.
- In our view, these negotiations should be inclusive and transparent. At the same time, they should not be too open-ended. It has to be an intergovernmental process, but there might be a necessity for some form of objective, outside driving force. Ideally, we should also create a time schedule for those negotiations, for example conclusion before the end of the next session of the General Assembly.
- As stated at the outset, Madame President, we commend your leadership role on this issue and look forward to work with your successor to enable us to move forward on this important part of the reform of the United Nations.

Thank you.