



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**235 East 45th Street, 16th floor
New York, NY 10017**

tel. (212) 519-9500
fax (212) 370-1954
www.pvnewyork.org

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. Ambassador Frank Majoor,

**Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
to the United Nations**

United Nations General Assembly

**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**

NEW YORK, 8 February 2007

Madam President,

It is befitting that within only two months after our discussions in the GA, we should be following up on the important subject of reform of the UN Security Council. Maintaining the momentum in implementing the *Outcome Document* of the World Summit of September 2005 is crucial and we very much welcome the renewed impetus that you, Madam President, are giving to this process.

We are confident that in a collective effort and in a spirit of flexibility, we may be able to develop practical reform proposals that will improve the effectiveness of the Security Council, as well as enhance the legitimacy and thereby the implementation of its decisions. Through my role as co-Facilitator at your request, Madam President, I hope that I can make a contribution to the process. I will personally be honoured to do so and to be working closely with you and with my four colleagues.

Even the most ardent supporters of maintaining the status quo will recognise that the Council cannot operate effectively and legitimately unless the Council's decisions are perceived as legitimate, equitable and credible by all Member States – not only governments, but also parliaments, civil society, citizens. Where extensive and sustainable military, financial and political support from other states is required to implement the Council's decisions, such perception is essential for the very survival of the Council and for the effectiveness of the United Nations as a whole.

Allow me to highlight the main elements of our national analysis and of the kind of reforms that – in our view – this would call for.

(Analysis)

- First, legitimacy and effectiveness are not only a matter of representation. While certain countries and certain regions – such as Africa – are currently underrepresented, improved working methods and assured interaction of countries with the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies is key.
- Second, greater – perhaps institutionalised – consultation of those countries on which relevant resolutions may have a direct bearing is needed. Various means to achieve this could be considered, ranging from more frequent use of article 31 of the Charter to offering regional organizations a seat in the Council on certain occasions.
- Third, a special look at, and consultation on the precise tasks of the Security Council is warranted, given the Council's broad interpretation of what constitutes international peace and security.

(Implications for reform)

The implications of all this in terms of reforming the Council's membership structure cannot be defined in a black and white approach. Rather, the dynamic nature of the balance of power in the world and the changes in geopolitical realities that have occurred call for a flexible one. As we have recognized before, the need for a transitional arrangement appears to be gaining ground. Without precluding any future discussions, such an arrangement might enable us to address some immediate and legitimate concerns and to gain experience with an expanded Security Council that is more accessible.

Madam President,

In calling for this meeting, you have set an important agenda. The issues on which we should focus our discussion are very much interrelated and they should be treated as such. This indeed calls for a comprehensive approach culminating in a consolidated report within the coming months. In preparing this report, we should also be seeking support for our activities at various levels. This might include the UN Secretary-General himself, who has indicated his willingness to play an encouraging and stimulating role.

As much as our approach should be comprehensive, it should also be as inclusive as possible, by taking on board the views that various members and groups of states have expressed in the past. In fact, our process of working towards solutions that can be endorsed by all members should itself exemplify what we envisage for the Security Council in the future: openness, inclusiveness and transparency. You have rightly highlighted these principles in your recent communication to this Working Group. It is in this spirit, Madam President, that we gladly offer you our full support.

Thank you.