



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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:

Statement by H.E. Mr. Christian Wenaweser, Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein
8 February 2007

Madame President

We welcome the fact that you have initiated a process on Security Council reform. While we have made some advances in the 18 months since the World Summit, the issue of enlargement in particular has been dormant for a long time now, consensus being limited to the fact that enlargement is needed – if indeed there is consensus on that. While we believe that the establishment of a process is of paramount importance per se, it is of course also essential what kind of process we embark on.

- We are satisfied with the format you are proposing, since it covers the most important topics to be considered. We believe that the facilitators should be given a free hand in how to organize their respective clusters, i.e. to choose whether they wish to consult in open-ended format or choose bilateral or other talks instead. The issues at hand are different in nature, so there might be a good reason for tackling them in a different manner.
- We are also willing to work with the timetable you have suggested, while we believe that this first phase of consultations could be concluded in less time than proposed. All five topics have of course been discussed extensively in the past.
- While the format of five facilitators can be very efficient, it also entails the risk of an incoherent approach which might pose difficulties because the five baskets are of course interconnected. We trust that your leadership will ensure a consistent way of looking at the topics under consideration.
- We hope that the phase we are embarking on now will result in concise summaries from the facilitators. These would ideally be presented together and accompanied by your own personal assessment of where the process stands and how it can further be advanced. A debate in the plenary of the GA might assist you in deciding how to take the process forward once we have concluded this round of consultations.

Madame President

We have clear views on SC reform, as many others in the room do. We understand that this meeting is not the right place or time to offer our detailed position on all aspects of reform. However, I want to place on record some of the fundamental parameters which serve as our guiding principles in the discussions we are about to commence:

- We believe that the OEWG is a good forum for conducting soundings of the views of Member States. But we also believe that SC reform will remain elusive unless we move outside of this group and take up the issue directly in plenary. As a member of the S-5, we have of course given very concrete expression to this conviction, in that we tabled a resolution on SC reform during the past session.
- SC reform consists of two parts, enlargement and working methods. These two parts are of course complementary, but more importantly they are of equal significance for the effectiveness, credibility and legitimacy of the SC – benchmarks contained in the outcome document. We continue to believe that we can achieve better results on working methods when dealing with this “cluster II” separately.
- On enlargement, we believe that none of the proposals tabled in the past will be able to command the necessary majority in the GA or indeed in an ensuing ratification process and that new approaches are therefore needed to tackle this question. We must not forget that we are not attempting a complete overhaul of the composition of the Security Council because we are not talking about restructuring or redistributing the existing permanent seats. Any reform has therefore limitations in scope and, by implication, in credibility. An effective review mechanism must therefore be a given feature of any proposal on enlargement.
- In addition to the benchmarks contained in the Outcome document, we believe that proposals on the enlargement of the SC must be achievable and ratifiable. A proposal adopted in the GA, but thereafter stuck in the ratification process for an indefinite period of time would probably create the one situation that is worse than status quo. This goal can be achieved with the expression of the strongest possible political support in the General Assembly. As examples in the past have illustrated, a numerically overwhelming majority can be a more powerful expression of political will than half-hearted consensus which disguises deep differences of opinion.

I thank you, Madame President