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62ND SESSION OF THE 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**

**Statement by
Ambassador John Mourikis
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations**

**NEW YORK
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**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**

17/6/2008

Statement by

H.E. Ambassador John Mourikis

Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations

Thank you Mr. President, for convening this meeting, on the issue of Security Council Reform, which has been debated for a considerable time, in fact for many years now.

We are among those who believe that time has come to go ahead with substantive discussion on this issue and we should not delay any further the opening of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council Reform.

The efforts and discussions so far have identified points of agreement. Differing points of view are unavoidable. However, this should not create obstacles in our will to embark upon a constructive exercise of negotiations regarding the future structure of the S.C.

In this context, we believe that the work recently presented by the P.R. of Cyprus, on behalf of the overarching group, could serve as a good starting point for the way ahead. Most elements for our discussion are contained in that paper which could be enriched with some constructive elements and ideas. We believe that the content of the aforementioned paper is feasible and offers a realistic approach as to the points for discussion. It identifies the points of convergence and could serve as an indicator of the highest common denominator. We would like to express our appreciation for this effort.

Mr. President,

We believe that in the S.C. reform there is a need to reflect changes and new developments of our today's world. We should find the ways to make the executive arm of the U.N. adapted to the new circumstances, reflecting contemporary realities, representative of the membership, transparent and efficient in its operations and decision-making.

Greece has consistently supported the candidacy of the G-4 for permanent membership. We recognize that the G-4 countries have earned their place in this new world and we consider their presence and contribution have been consistently positive and beneficial to the U.N. system. We believe that from a position of permanent membership to the S.C. they will be able to contribute even more and strengthen this body.

Having said that, we also believe that any expansion of membership the S.C. should include Africa. It is imperative that the African Continent be given the place it deserves in both categories of membership to the S.C.

Times have changed since the inception of the Charter of the U.N., and new realities as regards Africa should be taken into account. This same principle should also be examined for the participation of other groups of states in order to reform the membership to the S.C. in such a way, that it will be relevant to all. Therefore we should proceed to the expansion of membership to the S.C. accordingly so that concerns of all stakeholders be dealt with and taken care of.

Fully aware of the difficulties, and recognizing the need for a way out that could be of the unanimous agreement of membership, we would be ready to examine the merits and the feasibility of the "intermediate approach". We are driven by a constructive spirit to see substantial progress on this issue of S.C. reform which is being debated for so long and which seems to focus rather on procedures than on substance.

Mr President,

It would be an omission if we do not consider as well how to improve and review the S.C's Working Methods. This is an issue of equal importance as the expansion of membership. We believe that due attention should be given to this issue as well, in order to attain transparency and openness coupled with wider participation and efficiency. We are of the opinion that the reform process should include both issues, membership and working methods, in parallel tracks.

Before closing, we would like to reiterate our willingness to work in a transparent and constructive manner on all proposals which will open the way ahead to intergovernmental negotiations and which will meet the unequivocal support of all stakeholders.

Thank you