



Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations
57 Park Avenue New York, NY. 10016 Tel. (212) 679-4760 Fax. (212) 685-8741
E-Mail: guatemala@un.int

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**Statement by
Ambassador Gert Rosenthal
Permanent Representative of Guatemala**

27th Informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. facilitator:

Allow me to start by thanking you for very timely convening us to again deliver on the very important issue at hand.

Since my delegation has, in previous occasions, expressed its position on the six topics that gather us here today, I will attempt to be brief and not enter into its details.

Mr. Facilitator:

With regard to the question of **composition**, the position of Guatemala has evolved in the past years in order to achieve the bigger objective of reform, which seems to us more urgent as the years go by. At the beginning we firmly supported the notion of not accepting the expansion on the category of permanent members. Nevertheless, due to the paralysis that this issue brought to our discussion on the reform of the Council, with the time we came to accept the expansion in both categories as another way of democratizing this forum. In other words, between granting the privilege of permanent membership to only five countries or at least diversify that category with additional members, the latter appears to us as the lesser of two evils. Our main concern has always been to adapt the Council to the new realities of the world, since the least it reflects those realities, less influence will have in the real world, and that is harmful for the Security Council and harmful for the United Nations. At the end, from our vantage point, the imperative is achieving the reform versus the option of allowing the inertia to take over. This last option has an increasing cost and that is precisely why we became one of the many members of the General Assembly willing to take a flexible stand.

When we talk about the **size** of a reformed Security Council, my delegation has favoured a range between twenty to twenty-four members. We believe that this balances the objective of representativity with the need for agility in the carrying out of its duties. Having said this, we do think that any increase of the representativity must strive for a fair balance in better equitable geographical representation. What we look for is a more legitimate Council due to its composition, while at the same time a Council that can exercise its functions with the same agility as today.

With regard to **regional representation**, we understand it from the perspective of articles 23.1 and 24 of the Charter. At the same time, we understand the calls to take care of other selection criteria but we consider that it would be difficult to reconcile them with the current practice of using the geographic categories and we feel it would be more practical that each regional group takes the provisions necessary to address these other criteria.

Mr. Facilitator:

Regarding the question of the **relation with the General Assembly**, in several occasions we have expressed our support for initiatives aimed at improving the interaction between both principal organs, including an annual report from the Council to the General Assembly which content responds to the analytical needs of the rest of the membership, and that its adoption be made in a transparent manner through a public session that allows for an interactive discussion. We also reiterate our call for the necessary reflection on the relation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, strengthening that constitute in itself another important challenge in our agenda and where we see the Peace Building Commission as an invaluable opportunity to deepen and strengthen this relation.

Moving on to the issue of the **veto**, our preference would be to eliminate this privilege, that gives an infinite weighted vote to five countries. Even though, we acknowledge that this preference is unrealistic with regard to its viability. This reaction somewhat ambiguous is a dilemma for us, since on the one hand we don't like the veto, it will be wrong for us to support its expansion. But on the other hand, if we come to accept the expansion of the Council in both categories, it will be wrong to deny the new permanent members the same privileges that already enjoy the current permanent members. We would be creating a third category: permanent member with veto, permanent member without veto, and non permanent. At the end we have accepted the thesis that if there is expansion in the category of permanent members, all of them must have the same rights and obligations, notwithstanding the serious drawbacks we acknowledge to this position.

Although we are conscious of the importance of the increase in the membership as a way to guarantee the representativity of the Council, we consider equally important to improve the accountability mechanisms as well as transparent and precise **methods of work** that would guarantee all the members of the United Nations – not only the

members of the Council - better access to the information and a real possibility of participation.

In closing, we have heard many times that not reforming the Council could be preferable to a reform that ends up nullifying its capacity to act. We don't accept such thesis. The reform of the Council is an imperative to adapt the United Nations to the needs of the XXI Century. There, the proverb that "the perfect is the enemy of the good" is applicable to our work. There will not be a reform that to the eyes of the entire membership will be perfect. We will have to be satisfied with the good, because doing nothing at the end will be worst. That is why; we come to this reform debate with a spirit of flexibility, to add ourselves to those agreements that garner the support of the majority of the membership.

I thank you