

Statement by Mr. Vivek Katju, Special Secretary, International Organizations and Political issues, At the Informal GA Plenary Meeting on "Intermediate model" at the United Nations on 3 September 2009

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for you, Mr Chairman, and to greet colleagues here as I take the floor for the first time on the reform of the UN Security Council, which remains an issue of abiding interest for all of us.

Mr Chairman,

I wish to commend your impartial leadership of these intergovernmental negotiations and your willingness to listen to all shades of opinion, including on an intermediate model, which is not in consonance with the desire of the majority of member states. As you have correctly noted, Mr Chairman, the majority favours expansion of the Security Council in permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

It is for this reason that India had suggested earlier this week that we might find better use for our limited time today. Colleagues have argued, and I believe convincingly, that the focus of this round of negotiations should be forward-looking. That obviously means we should focus on the details of what Member States desire, which is reform and expansion of the Security Council in both existing categories of membership.

In suggesting we make better use of our time, my delegation was not motivated solely by its apprehensions on the intermediate approach. Equally, it was predicated on the fact that the intermediate model does not address the core demand of Member States. i.e, genuine reform of the Security Council. That being so, it is hard to see how it helps us to engage in a discussion on this issue since this model does not appear to garner overwhelming, or even requisite, support.

While we are open to general explorations of ideas and proposals, we need clarity on the utility of such general ideas. What is the intermediate model "intermediate" to? For those of our UFC colleagues who present this notion as a sign their "flexibility"--which, as we know, is a distillation of the old wine of limiting expansion to the non-permanent category in the new bottle of flexibility, we need to ask ourselves, in what way is it "intermediate"? If it is in the sense of a "compromise", where is the "compromise" on their part, since this is essentially limiting us to expansion in the non-permanent category.

For those of us who believe that an intermediate solution is essentially an interim measure, in that it postpones a decision until it is easier for those who have opposed expansion of the Security Council in both categories for fifteen and years and more, I can only say that we are deluding ourselves to believe that a comprehensive solution will be easier to find later. Indeed, one can argue that the quest for a lasting solution would be stymied by an interim structure.

It is sometimes suggested that the intermediate model is a stepping stone to a permanent seat. If that is so, it would be better to say so directly and proceed with discussions on the model of expansion in both categories, which commands majority support.

Mr Chairman,

Not making the right choices will mean that the problems that currently beset the UNSC will persist in the future. It is for this reason that we think we need to be practical and forward-looking. It is clear that the so-called intermediate model does not enjoy wide support, even as a second preference. Let us instead discuss the variations on the model of expansion of both categories. That would be sensible.

Now, Mr Chairman, that you have shown your willingness to allow all possible views to be heard, it would make sense to focus our future efforts on the model that commands majority support: that is, expansion in both current categories of membership. We look forward to continuing these negotiations of the GA in informal plenary in the forthcoming 64th session on this basis. We would therefore support Germany and others who have suggested that progress made in negotiations over this year should be summarized, so that we can build upon the progress achieved. The suggestion that we have a workplan and a timetable for such discussions in the 64th UNGA session is also useful.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.

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