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# Press Conference

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

## **PRESS CONFERENCE BY CHAIR OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS**

### **ON SECURITY COUNCIL REFORM**

The flexibility shown so far in intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform was reason for optimism that the process would go forward, the delegate chairing the process said at Headquarters today.

There had been four rounds of negotiations since the process had moved from discussions in the Open-ended Working Group to intergovernmental negotiations in the General Assembly framework, Zahir Tanin (Afghanistan), Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform, said at a press conference.

He went on to say that after the fourth round of talks, he had been asked to produce a text that would form the basis for further negotiations, and he had then requested Member States to submit their proposals and positions before 5 March. Based on the proposals received, he would draft a negotiating text in an "open, transparent and inclusive" process that would be open to amendments and comments, Mr. Tanin said, expressing hope that the text would give the negotiations a "shot in the arm", although the outcome was up to Member States.

Responding to questions, he said he had requested proposals written in language "fit for negotiations", as was usual in such processes, and his text would therefore not be based on statements delivered by Member States during the four rounds of negotiations. After 5 March, he would be available for consultations on how to produce the text, he said.

Once presented, the text would be open to comments and amendments, Mr. Tanin said, adding that it would not be a "closed" text since the Chair sought to guarantee transparency in the process. Nor would it be a simple compilation of the proposals received, but a text that would help in the negotiations. However, he cautioned that he could not exclude any positions or narrow down options. Only Member States could do that, he stressed, pointing out that so far the Chair had enjoyed the support of everyone, although the process was being watched closely.

Noting that many proposals had been received from groups of States, he said he would therefore need some time before he could convene the fifth round of intergovernmental negotiations. He added that if States had not sent in their proposals before 5 March, "that is not my problem".

Asked about the necessity of Security Council reform in light of issues such as the lack of

progress on the Goldstone Report and Africa's under-representation, he pointed out that the Council's current structure had been established in the aftermath of the Second World War. In presenting their arguments for reform, Member States had said that the current Council structure did not represent today's realities and Council decisions could therefore not be perceived as legitimate. It was understandable that Council members, especially the five permanent ones, did not like such arguments, he said.

The Goldstone Report had not been part of the deliberations because the negotiations were not about the Council's actions but the need for a more efficient, transparent and representative body, he said, adding that the negotiations were "about the future, not about the past".

Asked about the basis for his optimism and what had changed after 15 years of negotiations, he said the talks were still alive, despite having been believed to have "hit the wall" during every round. For the first time, the negotiations would be based on a concrete text. The process was not about a vote, he stressed, adding that if it had been all about a "big bang event", the Chair's function would not be necessary. "If I am able to base negotiations on a legitimate text, that would be a big achievement," he said, emphasizing his efforts to "keep the house united".

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