

STATEMENT by H.E. František Ružička, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations on the Security Council reform

Mr. President

- Allow me to start by appreciating the dedication and commitment of the President of the General Assembly H.E. Ambassador John Ashe for advancing the issue of the Security Council reform.
- I would like to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his reappointment as Chair of Intergovernmental Negotiations.
- It is a proper occasion as well to appreciate the work and report of the current President of Security Council and to thank H. E. Ambassador Liu Jieyi for his statement.
- Undoubtedly, the work and responsibilities of the United Nations Security Council are enormous and, apparently, the workload and demands are increasing. We all have no doubts that both – permanent and non-permanent members - dedicate maximum efforts, manpower and brainpower to address the challenges with all complexity they deserve;
- The United Nations is a unique organisation. The real value is in universality and inclusivity of all nations. In two years we shall celebrate 70th anniversary of its creation. Three generations of politicians, diplomats were contributing to create better world. More stable, secure, democratic and sustainable. And the World has changed. Some issues were solved, some are persisting and new appeared.
- To address these new challenges the United Nations has to look into the mirror of 21st century. And we have to study the reflection from different angles, points, distance. In twilight and midnight.
- Syria should serve as a broken mirror of distorted and distracted picture of reality. Two years of Security Council inability to take a meaningful decision are alarming proof of the urgent need to overcome our differences, set aside our disagreements and look for innovative and creative decisions. There is no quick fix. But after 20 years of deliberations, the time is high to take the responsibility our citizens entrusted us. It is time to craft concrete, meaningful proposals and later deliver results.
- Slovakia is fully committed to working with all partners to continue negotiations on issues of modernizing the work, working methods, composition, communications and effectivity of the Security Council. We shall work and deliberate in good faith, with mutual respect, in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, seeking a solution that can garner the widest possible consensus.
- For the sake of speeding up the discussions, let me just briefly recap the already well-known position of Slovakia on the key issues and then make some suggestions for way forward:
 - First, we believe in the necessity of adapting the Council to the geopolitical realities of the 21st Century. States capable of assuming global responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security should become eligible for filling the posts of new permanent members of the Security Council. But this is not about privilege – it is much more about responsibility, commitments and obligations possible members are willing and ready to assume.
 - If we would like to make a step forward, we should not concentrate only on numbers. We should listen to substantial discussions of contenders, how they see their work and role in future Council. Getting in, how they would improve the work they probably criticized, when being out.
 - Second - Equitable geographical distribution of posts within the non-permanent category of the Security Council must be reflected and should embrace all regional groups in equal manner – including the Group of Eastern European States.
 - Third - The ideal goal is to get better representation as well as higher efficiency. Thus, the enlargement must not compromise its ability to function as defined in the Charter. We need Security Council that is effective and does not shy away from taking difficult decisions. A Council, that ensures prompt and effective action when needed. We believe that in order to ensure that, the enlargement of Council should be moderate and balanced.
 - Fourth - Slovakia does not favour extending the right of the veto to new permanent members. At the same time, a due consideration should be given to the scope and the manner that the veto is

being applied by the current Permanent Five Members. Let me just recall the proposals made in the run up to the 2005 Summit Outcome Document, in the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that called on “the permanent members, in their individual capacities, to pledge themselves to refrain from the use of the veto in cases of genocide and large-scale human rights abuses.” This call has been repeatedly reiterated and recently intensified and we fully support it.

- Mr. President, having said this, it is now time to move away from simple repetitions of our positions and start concrete negotiations on the basis of those proposals that have so far garnered the widest support. We feel the G4 and L69 proposals enjoy such status. But the only vehicle that may bring us to success is called compromise.
- Let us look again at some temporary/interim solutions: semi-permanent membership with the definition of criteria and rules. Or let us give appropriate attention to new initiatives as the code of conduct for the voluntary limitation of the use of veto. May be some others ideas are on the way. To see forest, we should take a step or two from the tree.
- Mr. President, for the sake of urgency and meaningful agreement, in light of the above-mentioned, our position is not carved in stone. Let me assure you, and all the partners, that Slovakia is open to all constructive proposals and considers them with maximum degree of flexibility and open-mindedness with the main aim: to reach tangible results that will finally allow us to adapt the Security Council to the realities and needs of the 21st Century.