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Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In my speech to the General Assembly in September 2003, I argued that we faced a decisive moment for the United Nations — and in particular for the aspiration set out in the Charter to provide collective security for all. I drew attention to deep divisions among the Member States on the nature of the threats that we faced and the appropriateness of the use of force to address those threats. I challenged the Member States to make the United Nations more effective. I concluded by announcing my intention to convene a high-level panel of eminent persons to provide me with a shared, comprehensive view about the way forward on the critical issues.

2. I asked Anand Panyarachun, former Prime Minister of Thailand, to chair the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which included the following eminent persons from around the world, who represent a wide range of experience and expertise: Robert Badinter (France), João Baena Soares (Brazil), Gro Harlem Brundtland (Norway), Mary Chinery Hesse (Ghana), Gareth Evans (Australia), David Hannay (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Enrique Iglesias (Uruguay), Amre Moussa (Egypt), Satish Nambiar (India), Sadako Ogata (Japan), Yevgeny Primakov (Russian Federation), Qian Qiqian (China), Salim Salim (United Republic of Tanzania), Nafis Sadik (Pakistan) and Brent Scowcroft (United States of America).

3. I asked the High-level Panel to assess current threats to international peace and security; to evaluate how our existing policies and institutions have done in addressing those threats; and to make recommendations for strengthening the United Nations so that it can provide collective security for all in the twenty-first century.

4. I am very pleased to be able now to transmit to the Member States the report of the Panel, which sets out a broad framework for collective security for the new century. It is a report of considerable range and depth. It adopts a broad perspective on security. It not only seeks to address specific threats, but identifies new ways of understanding the connections between them and the implications for the policies and institutions we must have in place.

A more secure world: our shared responsibility

Report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change*

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* Footnotes and annotations to the present report are available online at www.un.org/secureworld.

XIV. The Security Council

244. The founders of the United Nations conferred primary responsibility on the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council was designed to enable the world body to act decisively to prevent and remove threats. It was created to be not just a representative but a responsible body, one that had the capacity for decisive action. The five permanent members were given veto rights but were also expected to shoulder an extra burden in promoting global security. Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations established that membership in the Council as a whole was explicitly linked not just to geographical balance but also to contributions to maintaining peace and security.

245. Since the Council was formed the threats and challenges to international peace and security have changed, as has the distribution of power among members. But the Security Council has been slow to change. Decisions cannot be implemented just by members of the Security Council but require extensive military, financial and political involvement by other States. Decisions taken and mandates given have often lacked the essential components of realism, adequate resources and the political determination to see them through. The Secretary-General is frequently holding out a begging bowl to implement Security Council decisions. Moreover, the paucity of representation from the broad membership diminishes support for Security Council decisions.

246. Since the end of the cold war, the effectiveness of the Council has improved, as has its willingness to act; but it has not always been equitable in its actions, nor has it acted consistently or effectively in the face of genocide or other atrocities. This has gravely damaged its credibility. The financial and military contributions to the United Nations of some of the five permanent members are modest compared to their special status, and often the Council's non-permanent members have been unable to make the necessary contribution to the work of the Organization envisaged by the Charter. Even outside the use of a formal veto, the ability of the five permanent members to keep critical issues of peace and security off the Security Council's agenda has further undermined confidence in the body's work.

247. Yet recent experience has also shown that the Security Council is the body in the United Nations most capable of organizing action and responding rapidly to new threats.

248. Thus, the challenge for any reform is to increase both the effectiveness and the credibility of the Security Council and, most importantly, to enhance its capacity and willingness to act in the face of threats. This requires greater involvement in Security Council decision-making by those who contribute most; greater contributions from those with special decision-making authority; and greater consultation with those who must implement its decisions. It also requires a firm consensus on the nature of today's threats, on the obligations of broadened collective security, on the necessity of prevention, and on when and why the Council should authorize the use of force.

249. We believe that reforms of the Security Council should meet the following principles:

(a) **They should, in honouring Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations, increase the involvement in decision-making of those who contribute**

most to the United Nations financially, militarily and diplomatically — specifically in terms of contributions to United Nations assessed budgets, participation in mandated peace operations, contributions to voluntary activities of the United Nations in the areas of security and development, and diplomatic activities in support of United Nations objectives and mandates. Among developed countries, achieving or making substantial progress towards the internationally agreed level of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA should be considered an important criterion of contribution;

(b) They should bring into the decision-making process countries more representative of the broader membership, especially of the developing world;

(c) They should not impair the effectiveness of the Security Council;

(d) They should increase the democratic and accountable nature of the body.

250. The Panel believes that a decision on the enlargement of the Council, satisfying these criteria, is now a necessity. The presentation of two clearly defined alternatives, of the kind described below as models A and B, should help to clarify — and perhaps bring to resolution — a debate which has made little progress in the last 12 years.

251. Models A and B both involve a distribution of seats as between four major regional areas, which we identify respectively as “Africa”, “Asia and Pacific”, “Europe” and “Americas”. We see these descriptions as helpful in making and implementing judgements about the composition of the Security Council, but make no recommendation about changing the composition of the current regional groups for general electoral and other United Nations purposes. Some members of the Panel, in particular our Latin American colleagues, expressed a preference for basing any distribution of seats on the current regional groups.

252. Model A provides for six new permanent seats, with no veto being created, and three new two-year term non-permanent seats, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

<i>Regional area</i>	<i>No. of States</i>	<i>Permanent seats (continuing)</i>	<i>Proposed new permanent seats</i>	<i>Proposed two-year seats (non-renewable)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	1	2	6
Americas	35	1	1	4	6
Totals model A	191	5	6	13	24

253. Model B provides for no new permanent seats but creates a new category of eight four-year renewable-term seats and one new two-year non-permanent (and non-renewable) seat, divided among the major regional areas as follows:

<i>Regional area</i>	<i>No. of States</i>	<i>Permanent seats (continuing)</i>	<i>Proposed four-year renewable seats</i>	<i>Proposed two-year seats (non-renewable)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Africa	53	0	2	4	6
Asia and Pacific	56	1	2	3	6
Europe	47	3	2	1	6
Americas	35	1	2	3	6
Totals model B	191	5	8	11	24

254. In both models, having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations, a method of encouraging Member States to contribute more to international peace and security would be for the General Assembly, taking into account established practices of regional consultation, to elect Security Council members by giving preference for permanent or longer-term seats to those States that are among the top three financial contributors in their relevant regional area to the regular budget, or the top three voluntary contributors from their regional area, or the top three troop contributors from their regional area to United Nations peacekeeping missions.

255. The Panel was strongly of the view that no change to the composition of the Security Council should itself be regarded as permanent or unchallengeable in the future. **Therefore, there should be a review of the composition of the Security Council in 2020, including, in this context, a review of the contribution (as defined in para. 249 above) of permanent and non-permanent members from the point of view of the Council's effectiveness in taking collective action to prevent and remove new and old threats to international peace and security.**

256. Neither model involves any expansion of the veto or any Charter modification of the Security Council's existing powers. We recognize that the veto had an important function in reassuring the United Nations most powerful members that their interests would be safeguarded. We see no practical way of changing the existing members' veto powers. Yet, as a whole the institution of the veto has an anachronistic character that is unsuitable for the institution in an increasingly democratic age and we would urge that its use be limited to matters where vital interests are genuinely at stake. We also ask 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. **We recommend that under any reform proposal, there should be no expansion of the veto.**

257. **We propose the introduction of a system of "indicative voting", whereby members of the Security Council could call for a public indication of positions on a proposed action.** Under this indicative vote, "no" votes would not have a veto effect, nor would the final tally of the vote have any legal force. The second formal vote on any resolution would take place under the current procedures of the Council. This would, we believe, increase the accountability of the veto function.

258. In recent years, many informal improvements have been made to the transparency and accountability of the Security Council's deliberative and decision-making procedures. We also remind the Security Council that troop contributors have rights under Article 44 of the Charter to be fully consulted concerning the

deployment of troops to Council-mandated operations. **We recommend that processes to improve transparency and accountability be incorporated and formalized in the Council's rules of procedure.**

259. Many delegations on the Security Council lack access to professional military advice. Yet they are frequently called upon to take decisions with far-ranging military implications. We recommend therefore that the Secretary General's Military Adviser and the members of his staff be available on demand by the Security Council to offer technical and professional advice on military options.

260. We welcome greater civil society engagement in the work of the Security Council.