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“YOUTH EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE UNITED NATIONS ”

Panel 3, Security Council reform

Autor : Jacopo Ograbek (panel manager)

Jan Dirk Herbermann, journalist for different German media (panel moderator)

The discussion started with a brief historical analysis by Mr. Jan Dirk Herbermann, UN correspondent for different German media, on the Security Council (SC) which has not undergone any major reform in the last 65 years.

The use of the veto has been large, the strong majority of vetoes being cast by the Soviet Union. All Western countries complained about it, nevertheless a US Senator pointed out that the use of veto was not to be blamed, on the contrary the USSR behavior was proving the effectiveness of the SC system.

Meanwhile, some changes have been made: the Chinese seat was attributed to the Republic of China, commonly known as Taiwan, until 1971, when China's representation was replaced by the People's Republic of China via the UN General Assembly Resolution 2758; and, after the Soviet Union dissolution in 1991, it designated the Russian Federation as its successor.

We must admit that the SC is the most important institution in the world because it is in the position to legitimize the use of force (e.g. UNSC Resolution 678, authorizing the Gulf War as a mean to uphold previous resolutions, contra the 2003 US invasion of Iraq which was not legitimated by the UN). Therefore a reform of the SC should be wise, accurate, proper and impartial .

Broadly speaking the main challenge is to require the willingness of the five permanent members, i.e. the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom and France, - also known as the "Big Five" or "P 5" - to reform the Security Council.

Together with Mr. Herbermann, the participants elaborated the following guidelines:

First of all, *the veto power should not be abolished*, especially for the two Super Powers. Without the shield of the veto, the People's Republic of China and the United States of America will not be a part of the United Nations anymore, thus causing a non-recognition of the UN as a World Organization. Should this happen, the impact of the SC would be strongly limited, and the SC Resolutions would have the same relevance as the UNHRC Resolutions. The veto power system has been identified a self-defense mechanism for the United Nation system.

Next, *the number of the permanent members should not be changed but the number of non-permanent members should be increased to 15* and by no means reduced.

The aim of the Security Council is to solve urgent issues in order to achieve world peace, preferably in a short term and, most importantly, it has to be done efficiently. That is why the permanent members, beneficiary of the veto power, should be kept to the number of five.

On the other hand, even if, for the long term view of peace building, there is the General Assembly and the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council should have a broader world opinion which would be ensured by increasing the number of non-permanent members.

Furthermore, *the composition of the permanent members should change*. We should consider the fact that the political scenario has evolved since 1945. At that time the Second World War was over, but today, the Cold War has ended 20 years ago; ongoing now are the War on Terrorism and the rise of new Super Powers.

The main issue now on the table is what would be the criteria of a Security Council reform and who should be in a position to select them.

Proposals have been made so that either a special Committee of the General Assembly or the GA itself should carry out this task. Some criteria would consider economic power, estimated population, military force, and/or regional basis.

Great emphasis is to be given to the fact that while the Security Council is not a body reflecting the world, it is a body responsible for making the UN function. Equally of the utmost importance is the fact that other countries without the right of veto should be able to have the power to influence the decision making process within the Security Council.

Mr. Herbermann suggested that population be a criteria, whereas a criteria based on military or economic power is to be avoided, just as a criteria based on the democratic system will not be objective. In order to have no real discriminations, the population criteria is one of the most reliable.

In conclusion, the Russian Federation, the United States of America should stay in the Security Council since they still are Super Powers, the People's Republic of China as well, its rise in both the economic and political arena leaving no doubts by now. On the other hand France and the United Kingdom should not anymore be permanent members, preferably being replaced by having the European Union represented. Brazil, India and Nigeria (as the biggest African country), or South Africa, and also a Middle East country should be among other candidates. Still open is the appointment issue.

Discussions in our panel discussion were very fruitful and we were able to reach common positions by having voting procedure on the main issues, that allowed us to reach the conclusion enumerated above.



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