

UPDATE: Member States' support for UN2020

DATE: As at April 30, 2018
RE: Statements by Member States at meetings Feb, March and April 2018 of the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly.
FROM: Fergus Watt (ferguswatt6@gmail.com), UN2020 Coordinator

(A) Excerpts from statements that directly support the call for utilizing the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020 as an occasion for stocktaking, renewal and reform.

April 27, 2018
Norway

Referring to remarks made by others in previous meetings in this Working Group, Norway would like to fully support the proposal to start preparations for a high-level event to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020. Such an event could be an excellent opportunity to take stock of the state of the world and the role of the UN, including that of the General Assembly and our PGA.

I hope you will forgive me if this proposal seems a little off topic in today's meeting. But we felt that it would be useful to make our views known, as an input to your work on the draft resolution.

March 20, 2018

EU (plus 8 or 9 East European states that align with the statement)

Candidate countries: Turkey, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania.

Potential Candidate countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia.

Finally, the EU and its member states also support a timely preparation of the 75th anniversary of the UN. This would also provide the membership with a good opportunity to take stock of renewals and reforms and continue to work towards their thorough implementation. We have made major progress within the process of Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, in which the Ad Hoc Working Group has played an important role, but much still remains to be done. The EU and its Member States will continue to engage in the most constructive way possible, maintain momentum on these important topics, and look very much ahead to the next two thematic debates organized in this group's capacity.

March 9, 2018
Canada

. . . Second: It is not too early to focus on the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, and how we might use that occasion to enhance the relevance of the General Assembly for the decades ahead.

This Working Group can prepare the way for the formal preparatory process by encouraging multi-stakeholder inputs and thinking creatively about what we hear.

Third: Civil society has become an essential partner in advancing the goals of the UN.

For example, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require the full engagement of all partners.

Civil society voices helpfully inform inter-governmental processes addressing human rights, humanitarian action and sustaining peace. Governments have much to learn from listening to the broadest possible range of voices across the full range of issues we face.

I would like to point to one important example that may help to inform our work in the Ad Hoc Working Group. We understand that a civil society-led consortium is leading a “UN 2020 Initiative” focused on a review and renewal of the UN.

We would encourage delegations to engage constructively with the consortium and to consider positively not only ambitious goals for the UN’s 75th Anniversary, but more generally how we can make the General Assembly’s work more inclusive of civil society’s contributions.

March 9, 2018

AHWG Co-Chair Vladimir Drobnyak at conclusion of the debate

Among many important proposals, and many important messages being put forward today, I would like to particularly underline one, I quote “it is not too early to focus on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.” We took a careful note of it as well as of all other proposals.

February 20, 2018

Uruguay

2020 will mark the 75th birthday of our organization. We must begin now to think about how we might visibly mark this anniversary and properly celebrate in a visible fashion our achievements, and we must look clearly at how we will continue to implement agenda 2030 and we must properly celebrate our achievements.

(B) Additionally, several member states spoke out more generally in favour of the UN, UN reform & multilateralism, including Mexico, Brazil, Egypt, India, South Africa, Morocco. Excerpts from these statements:

February 20, 2018

Mexico

The General Assembly is the very cornerstone of the UN, and it plays a crucial role in order to ensure that tangible form is given to sustainable development and sustaining peace agendas.

It does so in order to uphold the collective interest and therefore it cannot sit on the sidelines of reform processes taking place across the three pillars of the United Nations and cannot remain passive or indifferent to the strategic vision, which the Secretary-General has proposed.

We hope that the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group will show results in this regard. The strengthening of the role, and the bolstering of the authority of the General Assembly contributes to improving the ownership which members have over the UN. It is serving also to bolster governance and strengthen multilateralism.

Measures must also be taken to lend greater visibility to the General Assembly and to further publicize the contribution it makes to championing the organization as a whole.

February 20, 2018

Brazil

These are challenging times for multilateralism, and yet we have never needed it so much. In our endeavours to strengthen the multilateral system, the revitalization of the General Assembly emerges as a critical issue . . . to preserve it as the chief deliberative policymaking and representative organ of the UN.

February 20, 2018

Egypt

The UN faces huge challenges nowadays, as well as very dangerous challenges especially in countering terrorism and maintaining international peace and security, achieving sustainable development, and tackling the root causes of conflict disputes all over the world. . . . This necessitates greater cooperation among all the main organs of the UN through concerted efforts and coordination of all movements that complement international endeavours.

February 20, 2018

India

The General Assembly must regain its leadership role in addressing major challenges facing the world. The success of the UN and multilateralism depends on the effectiveness of the General Assembly. The revitalization of the General Assembly must also be seen in the wider context of the overall reform of the United Nations, including the reform of the Security Council, which the general assembly has been struggling to address for the last 25 years. Comprehensive UN reform is imperative to make it reflective of current geopolitical realities and to enhance its credibility and capability to meet increasingly complex and pressing transnational challenges of our times.

... The time for change has come. Let us make genuine efforts to strengthen the role of General Assembly as the chief deliberative legislative and policy-making body of the international community. This will help strengthen the legitimacy of the United Nations and multilateralism itself.

March 20, 2018

Morocco

My delegation is committed like all member-states to this process to move forward multilateralism and its noble objectives, and we are determined to actively participate in any future work in a transparent, inclusive, and open manner.

March 20, 2018
South Africa

The working group should continue towards further enhancement of the working methods of the General Assembly in order for this principal organ to discharge its mandate as the apex of multilateralism.