



SALA STAMPA DELLA SANTA SEDE  
**BOLLETTINO**

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**INTERVENTO DELLA SANTA SEDE AL JOINT DEBATE DELL'ASSEMBLEA GENERALE  
DELLE NAZIONI UNITE SU REVITALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
(ITEM 52) AND STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (ITEM 54)**

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UNITE SU REVITALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (ITEM 52) AND  
STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (ITEM 54)*

Pubblichiamo di seguito l'intervento che l'Osservatore Permanente della Santa Sede presso l'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite, il Nunzio Apostolico S.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, ha pronunciato lunedì 4 ottobre scorso all'Assemblea Generale dell'O.N.U. nel corso del Joint Debate su "Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly" (item 52) and "Strengthening of the United Nations system" (item 54):

**• INTERVENTO DI S.E. MONS. CELESTINO MIGLIORE**

Mister President,

The Holy See looks at the process of strengthening the United Nations with hope, great interest and willingness to submit its contribution. It is a complex but much needed endeavor, which involves three different objects: structures, means, and ends.

During these last months, both public opinion and member States have rightly focused on the structure of the bodies of the United Nations. Implicit in such a discussion there was always a question about how the Organization's structure and functioning are adequate to the Charter's goals and on what means we can count to implement them. It is precisely this meaning that we attach to the ongoing discussion on "effective multilateralism": the capacity to fulfill the tasks set out in the Charter, some of which have been highlighted in the MDGs.

Characterized by its universal membership, this Organization must be adapted to equally universal goals. We know from experience that the shape of political life and the influence exercised by public authority are not always up to the task of promoting the common good. Today the universal common good is confronted with problems of world-wide dimensions; problems, therefore, which can be solved only by an authority possessed with power, organization and means co-extensive with these problems and whose sphere of activity is world-

wide. Thus, the bodies of the international community should be shaped so that they are capable of realizing the common good by ways and means adequate to the changing historical conditions.

Till now, the debate has laid emphasis on a wealth of reasons, motivations and valuable reflections about the institutional engineering of the United Nations. In this respect, perhaps the main point we wish to restate is that structures must reflect functions. As for the reform of the bodies, my delegation would like to suggest some terms of reference.

First of all, we should keep in mind that the United Nations is a community of States that shares fundamental values, well outlined in the Millennium Declaration: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility.

Strengthening the United Nations system implies the acknowledgment that this is a system founded on cooperation rather than on competition among States and actively nourished by constructive will, trust, keeping of commitments and collaboration among equal and reciprocally responsible partners. Making these founding principles irreversible is a primary task.

In the process of reforming and adapting this institution it is important to identify guiding principles, as well as objective, just and fair criteria, acceptable to all member States, that will in turn pave the way towards a constructive reflection on the composition of the different bodies.

The bottom line is the recognition of the principle that all States are by nature equal in dignity. We know very well in this institution that even though nations may differ widely in material progress and military strength, they are all conscious of their juridical equality. It is true, however, that the nations that have attained a superior degree of scientific, cultural and economic development have the responsibility to make a greater contribution to the common cause.

On a more practical note, the essential criteria that should be taken into account for reshaping the structures and revisiting the procedures of this Organization are as follows: for the structures: representation and inclusiveness; for the procedures: impartiality, efficiency and efficacy; for the outcomes: accountability and responsiveness.

The legitimacy of the decisions taken in the United Nations, including the Security Council, ultimately derives, as for any political body, from two pillars: degree and scope of representation, and process of decision-making. Decision-making will therefore tend, in general, towards a greater consensus of opinions in the deliberations.

It is clear that, for practical reasons, not all the bodies of the United Nations can be arranged on the model of the General Assembly. This does not mean however that the set of principles and criteria just mentioned are not applicable to the Security Council, quite the opposite. In restructuring this body, one might consider that its composition should reflect, as far as possible, a representation of the world population, of geo-political regions, of various levels of economic development and of different civilizations. This list may not be complete, but it includes criteria that are essential in order to improve the credibility and efficacy of a reformed Security Council. Finally, it is important to consider the actual capacity and political will to contribute substantially to reach the goals that constitute a priority for the overall majority of the member states.

At the same time, as the Panel on United Nations - Civil Society Relations recommended in its report to the Secretary General, the United Nations needs to become a more outward-looking organization capable of listening more carefully to the needs and demands of the global community.

In this context we are reminded of the recommendation of the same Panel to "connect the global with the local". This criterion can be read as a modern version of the well known notion of subsidiarity, which is another landmark for the process of reform. In fact, most problems in today's world, because of their gravity, breadth and urgency, are often simply too difficult for the rulers of individual States to solve with any degree of success. At the same time, we must make it clear that the United Nations' essential purpose is to create world conditions in

which the public authorities of each nation, its citizens and intermediate groups, can carry out their tasks, fulfill their duties and claim their rights with greater security.

It is our hope that some of these ideas may help to ensure that the reform of this institution will not only help to realize our common goals, but that it will invest the United Nations with the necessary authority, in terms of credibility and moral legitimacy, to act for the good of the global community. That is surely the primary reason for the United Nations' existence.

Thank you, Mister President.

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