

G4 Ministerial Joint Press Statement

23 September 2020

1. On 23 September 2020, the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries, H.E. Mr. Ernesto Araújo, Foreign Minister of Brazil, H.E. Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Minister for External Affairs of India, and H.E. Mr. Motegi Toshimitsu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and H.E. Mr. Niels Annen, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office on behalf of H.E. Mr. Heiko Maas, Foreign Minister of Germany, met virtually during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

2. “The world of today is very different from what it was when the United Nations was created 75 years ago. There are more countries, more people, more challenges but also more solutions. Our working methods need to keep pace and adapt. (...) We reiterate our call for reforms of three of the principal organs of the United Nations. We commit to instill new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council.”

These words from the declaration just adopted by all Heads of State and Government reaffirm our common resolve to finally take decisive steps towards the early and comprehensive reform of the Security Council that was envisaged by Heads of State and Government in the 2005 World Summit.

3. In keeping with this call, G4 Ministers highlighted the urgency of reforming the United Nations and updating its main decision-making bodies, in order to better reflect contemporary realities. G4 Ministers expressed disappointment at attempts to derail this process and committed to addressing the issue in a meaningful way and with increased urgency at this 75th anniversary of the UN.

4. As part of reforming the Security Council an expansion of the Security Council in both categories will be indispensable to make this body more representative, legitimate and effective, enhancing therefore its capacity to deal with the complex challenges the world faces today on questions of international peace and security. Only if we manage to reform the Security Council will we stop it from becoming obsolete. Broader membership of the Security Council, with increased and enhanced representation of countries with the capacity and willingness to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, including from Africa, will allow it to preserve its credibility and create the political backing needed for the peaceful resolution of today’s international crises.

5. G4 Ministers expressed their concern at the lack of any meaningful movement forward in the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on Security Council reform and expressed their concern that – after two sessions in February and March – the IGN was adjourned due to COVID-19 and no further meetings were held thereafter. However, virtual meetings or a written process could have taken place to allow for progress to be made in the previous session.

6. This progress should also have included a reflection of the Common African Position as enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. The recent session demonstrated yet again that the IGN lacks the necessary openness and transparency and is constrained by flawed working methods. The IGN should be guided by the decision-making requirements and working methods laid out in the Charter of the United Nations and in the rules and procedures of the General Assembly.

7. G4 Ministers are convinced that time has come to leave behind debates based solely on general statements, without substantive text based negotiations actually taking place in an intergovernmental setting. An overwhelming majority of UN Member States firmly support a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, and expect the IGN to deliver concrete outcomes in the 75th anniversary year of the United Nations. The IGN in the current session should start immediately as a direct continuation of the previous session.

8. G4 Ministers reiterated their support for each other's candidatures as aspiring new permanent members in a reformed Security Council given the capacity and willingness to take on major responsibilities with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security. There is a clear need for an enhanced role of developing countries and of major contributors to the United Nations to make the Council more legitimate, effective and representative. Africa needs to be represented in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership of a reformed and expanded Security Council to correct the historical injustice against this continent with regard to its under-representation in the Security Council. What is needed is a representative UN Security Council to help us restore confidence in international cooperation and global governance – urgent more than ever in these testing times.

9. The G4 will continue to engage with other reform-minded countries and groups and pursue the start of text-based negotiations without delay. The Ministers expressed their determination to seek concrete outcomes during the 75th session of the General Assembly, instructing their delegations to support the efforts of the President of the General Assembly to promote early reform of the Security Council. Together, we need to work towards strong, legitimate United Nations.