

Dear Excellency,

I have the honour to enclose for your reference the report of their Excellencies Ambassador Paul Badji, Permanent Representative of Senegal, and Ambassador Daniele Bodini, Permanent representative of San Marino on the consultations they conducted as Facilitators on Revitalizing the Role and Authority of the General Assembly.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration

Haya/Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations New York



Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations



Permanent Mission of San Marino to the United Nations

August 2, 2007

Excellency,

It is our honor to present you with the <u>Report to the President of the General Assembly on the Consultations Regarding Revitalizing the Role and Authority of the General Assembly.</u>

We believe it is a comprehensive explanation of our work and findings undertaken as Co-Facilitators on the Revitalization of the General Assembly during the 61st session. We kindly ask you to forward it, in its entirety to Member States, as it is our hope that it offers the basis for further the work on this important issue.

Thank you for entrusting us with this critical task of moving the issue of Revitalization of the General Assembly forward during the 61st Session. We have been honored to work with you and to carry out this mandate under your leadership.

We remain available for future cooperation and we avail ourselves of this opportunity, Excellency, to renew the assurances of our highest esteem.

Ambassador

Mr. Paul Badii

Permanent Representative of Senegal

Ambassador

Mr. Daniele D. Bodini

Permanent Representative of San Marino

H.E. Sheika Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa
President of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York





REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE CONSULTATIONS REGARDING

REVITALIZING THE ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

H.E. Mr. Paul Badji, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Senegal

H.E. Mr. Daniele Bodini, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of San Marino

> General Assembly, Sixty-first session United Nations, New York August 2, 2007

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	d. Letter from the President, July 25 th , 2007
	e. Draft resolution, A/61/L.65, distributed, July 31st, 2007

I. Introduction

1. On March 9th 2007, the President of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, H.E. Sheika Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, entrusted us to conduct consultations with the Membership on taking forward the issue of Revitalization of the General Assembly in the current session (see attached letter). We were asked to conduct open transparent and inclusive consultations with Member States on their views regarding "...the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the Assembly, open to all Member States: to identify ways to further enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on relevant Assembly resolutions and reviewing the agenda and working methods of the Assembly; and to submit a report to the Assembly its sixty first session, pursuant to paragraph 31 of GA RES 60/286.

II. Proceedings

- 2. We proceeded in three stages:
 - Gathering ideas through Bilateral Meetings
 - Roundtable Interactive Debates
 - Plenary Meetings with discussion of GA Draft Resolution

3. Gathering ideas through Bilateral Meetings

We conducted bilateral meetings with a wide group of Member States and encouraged them to express their ideas and positions on what they considered to be the most pressing items affecting the General Assembly. Based on more than 80 interviews with Permanent Representatives, a meeting with the Secretary-General as well as meetings with other members of the Secretariat, we identified six major topics of concern as documented in our Non-Paper distributed on April 30th (see attached).

4. Roundtable Interactive Debates

After our preliminary findings, we promoted constructive interactive debates among randomly selected, small groups of Member States. Having observed in past General Assembly meetings, that often, only a few countries take the floor, it was our intention to encourage every delegation to express their views on General Assembly Revitalization. As a matter of fact, every Member State has a major stake in the General Assembly and is protective of its prerogatives and rights (one seat, one vote). We are pleased to report that approximately 160 countries participated and shared their views during these six debates, held on May 14, 15, 16 and 18. Most meetings generated positive and concrete ideas, and we believed that a window of opportunity opened up to begin working on a new substantive resolution, drafted and distributed to Member States on June 6th (see attached).

5. Plenary Meetings with discussion of GA draft resolution

Plenary meetings were held on June 12th, 19th, 26th 28th 29th, July 13th and one informal "informal" consultation was held on July 16th. During these meetings, we reviewed our proposed draft resolution and discussed suggestions from Member States. Despite the considerable interest of some countries and groups to negotiate a substantive resolution, we found that consensus could not be reached in the 61st session. We therefore followed the suggestion of several Member States to request the President of the General Assembly to present a procedural resolution for adoption in the 61st session (distributed to Member States on July 25th) and for us to prepare this report to record our findings as Co-Facilitators.

III. Findings

6. During our bilateral and roundtable meetings, Member States highlighted the lackluster performance of the General Assembly and noted its decline in importance at the United Nations. Many delegations expressed dissatisfaction regarding the role of the General Assembly, its deteriorating working methods, the selection/election process of the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, the lack of implementation of the General Assembly Resolutions in general, and in particular on General Assembly Revitalization Resolutions among many other concerns. Following is a summary of Member States' recommendations on how to tackle these different issues:

General Assembly -

7. All Member States reaffirmed the central "position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations..." (A/RES/60/286). Moreover many delegations stressed the need for the General Assembly to become more active in its above mentioned role, including when dealing with issues of peace and security. A significant number of delegations felt strongly about the potential "encroachment "of some United Nations organs, upon the role of the General Assembly. On the other hand, some countries expressed worry over a possible "reverse encroachment". Several delegations pointed out that the role of each United Nation organ is already set out in the Charter and only needs to be fully exercised.

Role and Working Methods of the General Assembly-

8. During our discussions, many Member States reiterated a desire to strengthen the role of the President and the General Committee in order to enable the General Assembly to carry out its work in a more effective and efficient way. For this to happen, it has been suggested that enhanced prerogatives shall be given to the President of the General Assembly. It has been suggested for

instance, that the President of the General Assembly could, with the assistance of the General Committee, consult with the Member States and make recommendations to the Secretary-General prior to the establishment of the annual General Assembly agenda.

- 9. A large number of delegations were pleased about the success and frequency of General Assembly thematic debates during this session, sponsored by the President of the General Assembly (in fulfillment of previous General Assembly resolutions), and they expressed support for this practice in future sessions. Throughout our conversations, some delegations repeatedly pointed out the potential encroachment by different United Nations organs on such thematic debates and therefore several suggested that the President of the General Assembly should coordinate such debates in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, in particular the Security Council and ECOSOC.
- 10. Most, if not all, delegations reaffirmed the need for meetings at least one month before the end of the three-month transition period, formal coordinating meetings between the incoming and outgoing bureaus of the main committees should be arranged.
- 11. A topic of considerable interest to many Member States has been the consolidation of reports and the streamlining of future resolutions. Despite the agreed upon importance of this issue, there is a strong difference of opinion on how to make progress.
- 12. With few exceptions, many delegations highlighted the need for further rationalization of time spent in the General Assembly. Different alternatives to address such concerns have been considered, including a mandatory time limit on speeches.

- 13. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with the interaction between Member States' Parliaments and the General Assembly and encouraged furthering this practice.
- 14. While most delegations indicated an overall acceptance of the interaction between NGOs and the General Assembly, several Member States criticized the increasing use of General Assembly time by NGOs, reasserting that the General Assembly must maintain its intergovernmental nature.

Presidency of the General Assembly -

- 15. Many delegations reiterated the need to enhance the role of the Presidency and identified some recommendations to further strengthen its role and increase its effectiveness.
- 16. On the selection of the President of the General Assembly, all Member States expressed satisfaction with the practice of regional rotation. However, many delegations indicated support for the election of the President of the General Assembly and suggested different alternatives:
 - a) Regional groups shall support more than one Member State to declare candidates for election.
 - b) Regional groups shall support one Member State to declare more than one candidate for election.
 - c) Regional groups shall support one Member State to declare one candidate for election.
 - d) Regional groups shall support one Member State to declare one candidate for election by acclamation (present practice).
- 17. Many delegations identified the need for a healthier public image of the General Assembly. Some proposed enhanced media coverage for the President of the General Assembly, others pointed out that if the General Assembly did more significant work, media coverage would increase.

- 18. A majority of delegations felt strongly that the office of the President should be adequately funded and therefore supported adjusting the budget according to its need; a few expressed their disagreement, fearing that additional funds will create an unwanted bureaucracy in the President of the General Assembly office.
- 19. A number of delegations suggested that the President of the General Assembly should receive adequate protocol services, at least similar, to those accorded to the Secretary-General, at United Nations Headquarters and abroad.

Secretary-General/Secretariat -

- 20. While a few countries reiterated their concern about addressing this issue immediately after the election of a new Secretary-General, many others wanted to discuss this item and pick up on the progress made in the last session. A large majority of delegations welcomed the idea of having the declared candidates presented to the Member States in the General Assembly, beginning as early as one year before the Secretary-General elections. While most countries indicated satisfaction that the final selection of the Secretary-General is carried out by the Security Council, a very large number of delegations reiterated a desire to vote and elect the Secretary-General (by open or secret ballot). Other delegations supported the existing tradition of electing the Secretary-General by acclamation. A large majority of countries welcomed a regional rotation in the selection of the Secretary-General.
- 21. Many, if not all delegations, responded positively toward the idea of establishing the practice of regular informal briefings by the Secretary-General in the General Assembly.
- 22. During our conversations, we found that almost all the Member States noted inefficiencies in the performance of the Secretariat as well as a growing lack of accountability to the Member States. Many countries expressed openness

toward giving more flexibility to the Secretariat in exchange for increased accountability to the General Assembly.

Implementation of General Assembly Resolutions -

- 23. We found that implementation of General Assembly Resolutions is of utmost concern to all Member States. In fact, most countries expressed that the non-binding nature of General Assembly Resolutions makes its work less relevant. During our discussions, we asked delegations to express their views on this problem. Many countries suggested that Member States should take responsibility for General Assembly Resolution implementation concerning their country, while others proposed that a specific ad hoc working committee be formed to monitor this task. Several delegations suggested that the office of the President, with the General Committee should monitor and stimulate the implementation of General Assembly Resolutions. Some pointed out that the Secretary-General could be more involved in ensuring General Assembly Resolution implementation. Very few were content with the existing situation.
- 24. However, there was consensus to achieve full implementation of all previous General Assembly Resolutions on Revitalization as soon as possible during the 62nd session.
- 25. All delegations agreed to request the Secretary-General to prepare an updated report on the status of implementation of past and present Resolutions on General Assembly revitalization, during the 62nd session.
- 26. A significant number of Member States expressed the desire to establish an ad hoc working group on Revitalization of General Assembly at the 62nd session, to continue this work and make sure that past resolutions are implemented in their entirety.

IV. Conclusions

27. Throughout our work as Co-Facilitators, we found that all Member States confirmed their strong desire to revitalize the General Assembly and to strengthen its efficiency. When delegations were approached bilaterally and in small groups, a wealth of ideas came forth, some of which, are reported in this paper. Issues such as coordination of the work among the main bodies of the United Nations, participation in the selection/election process of the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, working methods between the Secretariat and the General Assembly, and implementation of the General Assembly resolutions, especially General Assembly Resolutions on Revitalization, are all of great interest to the vast majority of Member States. However, several delegations decided that it was not possible to negotiate a substantive resolution before the end of the 61st session. Therefore, taking into account the concerns and wishes of the Member States, we recommend that based on the content of the existing resolutions, and on the new ideas raised during the last few months and reported in this paper, a new General Assembly Revitalization Resolution should be negotiated during the 62nd session.

V. Attachments

- a. Letter from the President, March 9th, 2007
- b. Non-Paper distributed on April 30th, 2007
- c. Draft resolution distributed on June 6th, 2007
- d. Letter from the President, July 25th, 2007
- e. Draft resolution, A/61/L.65, distributed, July 31st, 2007



9 March 2007

Excellency,

In my letter of 22 December 2006, I informed Member States of my intention to conduct consultations on the preferred format for taking forward the issue of **Revitalization of the General Assembly**, in order to achieve a concrete outcome during this session.

I am therefore pleased to inform you that I have appointed His Excellency Ambassador Bodini of San Marino and His Excellency Ambassador Badji of Senegal as co-Chairs on General Assembly revitalization.

I have asked them to conduct, on my behalf, open, transparent and inclusive consultations with Member States' on their views regarding the "... establishment of an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the Assembly, open to all Member States: to identify ways to further enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on relevant Assembly resolutions and reviewing the agenda and working methods of the Assembly; and to submit a report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session", pursuant to paragraph 31 of General Assembly resolution 60/286.

I invite all Member States to assist Ambassador Bodini and Ambassador Badji in this important task and to clearly express their views on the different issues under consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations New York

Revitalization of the General Assembly

May 2007

Non-Paper

by

H.E. Mr. Paul Badji, Permanent Representative of Senegal H.E. Mr. Daniele Bodini, Permanent Representative of San Marino

The following list may guide you in preparing your views for the upcoming consultations on 14, 15 and 16 May 2007. All topics will be discussed during each debate. Member States are invited to provide written comments by May 10th 2007, and transmit them via email to sanmarinoun@hotmail.com and senegal.mission@yahoo.fr

I. Revitalization of the General Assembly

Framework for discussion of GA Revitalization:
 Open-ended ad hoc working group or not - periodicity

 Status of Implementation - A/RES/58/126, A/RES/58/316, A/RES/59/313 and A/RES/60/286 and Implementation of future Resolutions of GA Revitalization

II. General Assembly

- 3. Orientation Role
- Thematic debates content, number, outcomes
- 5. Limiting speeches to 5 minutes. Longer statements in written form
- 6. Interactive Debates for PR or DPR level only
- 7. Redundancy of votes at Committee and GA level
- 8. Transition between outgoing and incoming bureau of each Main Committee
- Streamline the agenda of each Committee
- 10. Role of the GA on issues of peace and security

III. Presidency of the General Assembly

- 11. Strengthen the Office of the PGA
- 12. Media exposure of the PGA and the GA
- 13. Proper protocol for the PGA
- 14. Mechanism to maintain institutional memory in the PGA office
- 15. Increase budget of President's office (unchanged since 1998)

IV. Secretary-General/Secretariat

- 16. Selection process of the Secretary-General
- 17. Election process of the Secretary-General
- 18. Regular briefing by the Secretary-General to the GA
- 19. Interactive meeting with the Secretary-General at the GA on specific issues
- 20. Flexibility Accountability for the Secretariat as a means to enhance its response to the work of the GA

V. Security Council

- 21. Implementing provisions of previous resolutions on the relationship between the GA and the SC-A/RES/58/126
- 22. Regular Verbal reports (Presidents or members of the SC) to the GA and specific written reports

VI. Implementation of General Assembly Resolutions

- 23. Responsibility of each Member State to implement GA resolutions
- 24. Responsibility for implementing GA Resolutions (PGA, General Committee, New Implementation Committee, or combination of the three)
- 25. Chart on the status of implementation timing, accuracy
- 26. Streamlining agenda/dormant issues
- 27. Effectiveness of the General Committee
- 28. Please rank the VI above areas of Revitalization in order of importance:

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Draft Resolution on Strengthening the role of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions relating to the revitalization of its work¹,

Aware of the need to strengthen its authority and role,

Decides to adopt the text contained in the annex to the present resolution.

6 June 2007

Annex

A. General Assembly

- Member States reaffirm the authority of the General Assembly and its central role
 as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United
 Nations, pursuant to the UN Charter and to the 2005 World Summit Outcome
 Document.
- 2. The main activities of the GA are to foster debate among all Member States and to provide recommendations on issues of common interest, including Development, Peace and Security, Conflict Prevention, Human Rights, Environment, Climate, etc.

B. Role and Working Methods of the General Assembly

- 3. The PGA, with the assistance of the GC, prepares the GA agenda, in consultation with Member States.
- 4. The PGA has the authority, after consulting with Member States, to convene thematic debates in order to address main issues of concern to the international community and to propose, if needed, coordination of such debates with other bodies of the UN, including the SC and ECOSOC.
- 5. In order to avoid redundancy and duplication, the PGA, after consultation with the General Committee and each committee bureau, ensures that the General Assembly does not repeat voting on resolutions already acted upon at the Committee level, unless requested by a Member State.

¹ Resolutions 46/77 of 12 December 1991, 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264 of 29 July 1994, 51/193 of 17 December 1996, 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/163 of 15 December 1997, 55/14 of 3 November 2000, 55/285 of 7 September 2001, 56/509 of 8 July 2002, 57/300 of 20 December 2002, 57/301 of 13 March 2003, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316 of 1 July 2004, 59/313 of 12 September 2005 and 60/286 of 9 October 2006.

- 6. At least one month before the end of the three-month transition period, formal coordinating meetings between the incoming and outgoing bureau of the main committees are arranged.
- 7. At the beginning of each session the PGA, consulting with States concerned and assisted, if necessary, by the General Committee and each main committee bureau, makes recommendations on how to best organize the work of the session, including consolidation of reports and streamlining of future resolutions.
- 8. PRs, acting PRs and DPRs are strongly encouraged to participate in GA meetings. 48 hours in advance of any GA meeting, the PGA decides if there is any time limit on the length of individual speeches or not. In case of a time limit, the PGA determines the length of time and enforces the limit.
- The GA encourages, where appropriate, continued cooperation between the GA
 and the national and regional parliaments, particularly through the InterParliamentary Union.
- 10. While preserving the intergovernmental character of the General Assembly and according to the existing procedure, the President of the General Assembly organizes exchanges of views on relevant subjects with participation of civil society, in particular those from developing countries, on relevant issues.

C. Presidency of the General Assembly

- 11. Consistent with the principle of regional rotation, regional groups are required to provide at least three candidates for the position of PGA. The GA will invite declared candidates to participate in interactive meetings with the whole membership and the GA will proceed to election. The same country cannot present candidacy for PGA until the entire membership has had the opportunity to serve in that capacity.
- 12. The PGA and his/her office are responsible for accessing and informing media of GA activities in a timely and effective manner. The DPI office is required to support these efforts.
- 13. The Office of General Assembly Affairs is required to provide assistance as needed to the President's office, especially to ensure that the office retains memory of the previous Presidency.
- 14. The office of the Protocol is requested to ensure that the PGA is provided with proper protocol services at Headquarters and any where else when the PGA is exercising his/her official duties.
- 15. Consistent with the goal to strengthen the PGA's role, it is recommended that the budget of the PGA office is funded accordingly.

D. Secretary-General/Secretariat

SG selection / election

. . . .

- 16. It is desirable that one year before the end of the SG's term, consideration be given to the successor. The General Assembly invites declared candidates to participate in interactive meetings with the whole membership.
- 17. Upon the SC recommendation on the candidates, the GA votes and appoints the SG (two-third majority).
- 18. Regional rotation is strongly recommended in the selection of SG candidates.

Relationship between the Secretariat and the General Assembly

- 19. Regular informal briefings by the SG to the GA are scheduled every 4 -6 weeks by invitation from the PGA or by request from the SG.
- 20. Each session, the PGA, in conjunction with the SG, organizes 2-3 open interactive thematic meetings among the membership of the GA and the SG.
- 21. The GA allocates human and financial resources for the Secretariat. The Secretary-General is committed to enhancing the performance of the Secretariat. The GA requests the SG to prepare, in the next few months, a proposal to allocate resources in a more flexible and efficient way in order to ensure the implementation of the mandates of the UN principle organs, while enhancing accountability and transparency.

E. Coordination between the main bodies of the UN

- 22. Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council are encouraged to meet periodically to facilitate increased cooperation and coordination.
- 23. If needed, the SC submits special reports to the GA on the affairs of the Council. The GA welcomes the President of the SC to discuss the SC work with the whole membership.

F. Implementation of GA Resolutions

- 24. The implementation of GA resolutions related to Member States is the responsibility of each Member State.
- 25. When requested by the PGA, the Secretariat prepares interim assessments on the implementation status of GA resolutions on specific issues. Countries not in compliance with GA resolutions are encouraged to report on the status of implementation of these resolutions.

- 26. The Secretariat should report on the status of implementation of GA resolutions pertaining to it that have not yet been fully implemented. The PGA should follow up on the implementation of these outstanding Resolutions until they are fully implemented.
- 27. It is the responsibility of the Secretariat, and the membership to work with the PGA to ensure implementation of all GA Resolutions on Revitalization (58/126 of December 19, 2003, 58/316 of July 1, 2004, 59/313 of September 12, 2005 and 60/286 of October 9, 2006), past and present, by December 31, 2007. To ensure implementation of these and future resolutions on GA revitalization, the GA establishes an open-ended ad hoc working group.



25 July 2007

Dear Excellency,

I have the honour to enclose herewith the letter of their Excellencies. Ambassador Paul Badji, Permanent Representative of Senegal and Ambassador Daniele D. Bodini, Permanent Representative of San Marino, dated 25 July 2007, in their capacity as the facilitators on the question of "The Revitalization of the General Assembly", containing a draft resolution on the issue as requested by the majority of Member States.

I would like to commend Ambassadors Badji and Bodini for their tireless efforts in conducting wide-ranging consultations with Member States and groups of Member States. I am confident that the entire membership shares with me this feeling of appreciation to their commitment and diligence.

I am hopeful that we will be able to adopt the attached draft resolution by consensus in the General Assembly on Thursday, 2 August 2007. The journal will indicate the exact time of the meeting.

Once again, I would like to thank all Member States for their support and assistance provided throughout the process of consultations on this very important issue.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Haya Rashed Al Khalifa

To

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited 31 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 110
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly

Revitalizing the role and authority of the General Assembly and strengthening its performance

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its previous resolutions relating to the revitalization of its work, including resolutions 46/77 of 12 December 1991, 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264 of 29 July 1994, 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/163 of 15 December 1997, 55/14 of 3 November 2000, 55/285 of 7 September 2001, 56/509 of 8 July 2002, 57/300 of 20 December 2002, 57/301 of 13 March 2003, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316 of 1 July 2004, 59/313 of 12 September 2005 and 60/286 of 8 September 2006,

Stressing the importance of implementing resolutions on the revitalization of its work,

Commending the President of the General Assembly for her efforts during the sixty-first session, in particular with regard to holding thematic debates on issues of high importance to the Member States, as well as increasing the visibility of the General Assembly and its work in the public, especially the media,

- 1. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an update to his report¹ on the implementation of resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, in particular resolutions 58/126, 58/316, 59/313, 60/286 and the present resolution, at its sixty-second session;
- 2. Decides to establish, at its sixty-second session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the General Assembly, open to all Member States, to evaluate and assess the status of implementation of relevant resolutions, to identify ways to further enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly, inter alia, by building on previous resolutions, and to submit a report thereon to the General Assembly.

¹ A/61/483.