

STOP PRESS

EXTRACT FROM REINTEGRATING THE UNITED NATIONS

**(Address to the 49th General Assembly of the United Nations by Senator
the Hon. Gareth Evans, QC, Minister for Foreign Affairs of
Australia, New York, 3 October 1994)**

REFORM OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

If the United Nations decision-making bodies are to have legitimacy and guaranteed international support in responding to the range of new and difficult situations with which the international community is now being confronted - particularly deadly conflicts and massive human rights violations occurring within states - they must be representative of the broad range of interests and perspectives of UN member states. This is a key reason why enlargement of the Security Council's membership is a pressing concern for this General Assembly. It should be said, at the same time, that the Security Council's legitimacy will ultimately depend not just on its representativeness, but upon the quality of its performance, and in that context it will be very important that this Assembly applies very rigorously the criteria and qualifications for Security Council membership elaborated in Article 23 of the Charter.

The model that would most simply meet the legitimate aspirations of the largest states presently excluded from permanent membership of the Security Council - including Japan and Germany, whose claims we support - would involve the creation of 5 new permanent membership seats. Assuming the continuation of the existing regional groups, 3 new Permanent Members would come from Africa and Asia, 1 from the Western European and Other States group (WEOG) and 1 from Latin America and the Caribbean. Australia would prefer not to extend the veto to any new permanent member, at the same time, we believe it would be appropriate to slightly dilute the veto power of the existing 5 Permanent Member by requiring 2 from their number to concur in its exercise.

If, as seems not impossible, agreement on a simple model of this kind proves not easily reachable, it may be worth giving consideration to a more complex alternative model. We have in mind one which would no doubt in practice guarantee effective permanency for the largest states presently excluded from the Council (including Japan and Germany). But it would at the same time give a greater degree of flexibility to the Council's structure, and greater opportunities for recognition of several other countries which have made a major contribution to the organisation. It might, for those reasons, be a model capable of commanding more widespread support.

This alternative model would involve, in addition to the 5 existing Permanent Members (whose veto power would again be slightly diluted, as already outlined), the creation of 8 Quasi-Permanent seats (allocated among regional groups) for which consecutive re-election would be possible, together with 10 rotating Non-Permanent seats. It would make

would be possible, together with 10 rotating Non-Permanent seats. It would make abundant sense, in our view, for the existing regional groups to be at the same time modified to reflect post-Cold War realities. A suggested way in which these 23 seats might be distributed among such a new set of regional groups is set out in the table attached to the circulated text of this speech; that table also sets out how they might be distributed among the existing groups. On this model, the question of which states became Quasi-Permanent Members, and how long they remained on the Council in that capacity, would be a matter for determination by the regional group in question.

Consequential amendments would be required to Articles 23 and 108 of the Charter, and the opportunity should be taken at the same time to remove the anachronistic enemy states clauses. An accompanying General Assembly Resolution could elaborate any new regional group arrangements.

It is of course the case that any change to Security Council membership is fraught with complexity and difficulty. But if we are ever to move from the stage of generalised discussion to concrete negotiations it is necessary to put some quite specific and comprehensive proposals on the table. I certainly do not suggest that the models I have advanced are the only possible approaches, but I do strongly suggest that the time is now ripe for us to commence such negotiation. I believe that others share our determination to move in a spirit of good will and conscientiousness to see that the United Nations for the next 50 years is soundly built, and an expanded, newly legitimised Security Council is a crucial foundation in this respect.

Australia wants the United Nations over the next 50 years to be an active and effective agent for the peaceful settlement of disputes. We want it to be a catalyst for international peace building, working to strengthen international law, control and reverse arms races, promote confidence and dialogue between states and address underlying causes of instability, including internal conflict. We want it to promote, in more effective coordination with the major international economic and financial institutions, equitable and sustainable development and to coordinate responses to humanitarian crises. We want it to emerge even more strongly as a promoter of universal standards of human rights and their respect by governments. We want the UN to pursue its objectives of peace, development and human rights in an integrated, coordinated way, with these objectives complementing rather than being in competition with each other. And we want it to be an organisation assured of the wholehearted backing of its member states, and provided by them with all the financial resources it requires to meet its obligations.

We want, in short, the United Nations to become the organisation which was envisaged in its Charter. One of the priority objectives of our candidacy for election to the Security Council in 1997-8 is to help in the building of such a United Nations. We believe we have valuable contributions to bring to this task, and look forward to working closely with all our fellow members in the shaping of a United Nations fully capable of meeting the needs and expectations of all of us in the international community over the next 50 years.