

COUNCIL
120th session
Agenda item 4

C 120/4/6
11 June 2018
Original: SPANISH

STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REFORM

Working Group on Reforms to the Council

Submitted by Guatemala

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	The present document requests that, as mandated by the thirtieth session of the Assembly, an open-ended working group be established to examine possible reforms to the Council
<i>Strategic direction, if applicable:</i>	7
<i>Output:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 6
<i>Related documents:</i>	A 30/21/3 and A 30/D

1 At the thirtieth session of the Assembly, Guatemala submitted document A 30/21/3, in which it proposed the permanent removal of the practice of electing Council members by acclamation, in accordance with the regulations applicable to elections. It also proposed that a secret ballot always be used for those elections.

2 The topic was discussed under agenda item 21 at the plenary session on Friday, 1 December 2017. Guatemala submitted its document, in which it stated that the proposal sought to improve the Organization, make it democratic, and guarantee the legitimacy of its actions and decisions through governance based on a broad and sound consensus among its membership, transparency of its decision-making procedures and mechanisms, the general principles of rotation and equitable geographical distribution, and finally the sovereign equality of States. Guatemala stated that the next step after the matter of election by acclamation should be to establish a group to study and examine possible reforms to the Council, including its biennial election cycle, the number of seats, which has remained unchanged for a long time, the election "categories" and criteria, equitable geographical representation, and the dynamics of this electoral process.

3 Guatemala's submission received wide support from the Assembly and many delegations from Member States expressed the need to discuss possible reforms to the Council.

4 Two decisions were taken in respect of Guatemala's submission: (a) to discontinue the practice of election of Council Members by acclamation, replacing it with election by secret ballot; and (b) that, by mandate of the Assembly, the Council must receive proposals for reform to the Council when such requests are submitted to it. For Guatemala, this means that the Council must establish the mechanism proposed by Guatemala – a study and analysis group, an open-ended working group – which would assume the task of examining the proposals for reform and improvement of the Council (A 30/D, paragraphs 21.2 and 21.3).

5 Accordingly, Guatemala requests that the Council approve, at the present session, the establishment of an open-ended working group with the mandate to receive and discuss possible reforms to the Council, of any nature, and to duly submit the results of those discussions to the Council itself, for referral to the Assembly, which, as the supreme body of the Organization, would decide on such reforms.

Action requested of the Council

6 The Council is requested to:

- .1 note the information provided in this document and comment as appropriate; and
 - .2 establish an open-ended working group on reforms to the Council with the task of receiving, studying and discussing proposed reforms to the Council, of any nature, and duly submit the results of those discussions to the Council with a view to them being remitted to the Assembly, which would make a decision on the said results.
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