



# AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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## UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

25 November 2019

### Open Debate on Security Council Reform

**Statement by H.E. Mr Mitch Fifield  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the  
United Nations**

(As delivered)

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Mr President,

Can I also take the opportunity to acknowledge the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. I assure colleagues the tie I'm wearing with five shades of orange was actually fashionable 15 years ago. But it's important we use whatever means to highlight this important issue.

Mr President,

Australia welcomes the ongoing, system-wide UN reforms aimed at improving the UN's effectiveness in contributing to sustainable development and sustaining peace. But there are important areas of the reform needed at the UN which have not been advanced. With the United Nations approaching its 75th anniversary in 2020, Australia once again calls for the United Nations Security Council to reform and evolve to respond effectively to the challenges of the 21st Century.

The international rules-based order upholding global stability, security and prosperity is under significant strain.

Now, more than ever, we must urgently find ways to ensure the Council can act as it must to address the challenges of today and maintain international peace and security.

Questions hang over whether the Council is set up in the best way to maximise its effectiveness. Reform is well overdue, and Australia has been consistent in urging for change on three points.

First, a Council that best reflects contemporary geopolitical realities, with greater representation for Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Second, improvements to the Council's working methods, including better coordination with the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, and other partners; ensuring more use of coherent analytical information from across the UN system; and better consultation with troop and police contributing countries.

Third, better standards need to be developed on the use of the veto so that its use is more transparent and limited.

We regret that progress on reform of the Council has been incremental to date. It has moved at a glacial pace, if it has moved at all.

One way we can better shape the direction of and catalyse reform is by moving from discussions to engaging in text-based negotiations. This will build the momentum needed to effect change.

The IGN should take steps to identify specific proposals, attribute support, and strive to achieve a more transparent process that can be formalised in the General Assembly.

Our world is increasingly complex and contested, and we can do better to meet contemporary pressing challenges to peace and security.

We are clear-eyed that comprehensive and meaningful reform will not come quickly. But there is a clear desire of the member states that we move on from the status quo.

In closing, Australia reinforces our commitment to working towards UNSC reform with all member states so that we can better ensure stability, prosperity and human rights for all in a more peaceful world.