



## Resolution 1373 (2004)<sup>1</sup>

# Strengthening of the United Nations

## Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly has a long history of constant support for the United Nations. It recalls its [Resolution 1351 \(2003\)](#) on the role of the United Nations in Iraq in which it calls unilateral action a fundamental challenge to the principles of collective security and the United Nations Charter. Likewise, its previous recommendations concerning the United Nations ([Recommendation 1367 \(1998\)](#) on reform of the United Nations, [Recommendation 1411 \(1999\)](#) on relations with the United Nations and [Recommendation 1476 \(2000\)](#) on the United Nations at the turn of the new century) call for an enhanced role for that organisation.
2. The Assembly continues to give its full backing to the strengthening of the United Nations, a world body of which its members feel fully part. It underlines the necessity for the United Nations to maintain its capacity to adapt to new challenges while remaining faithful to the purposes and principles laid down in its charter.
3. The Assembly welcomes the forward-looking attitude of the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, and his readiness to cast a critical eye on his organisation in an urge to adapt it better to the requirements of today's world. It gives its full backing to the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change set up by the Secretary General in November 2003.
4. The year 2003 has been a difficult one for the United Nations and for those who believe in collective responses to global challenges. Confidence in the multilateral system has been undermined by the war in Iraq, the occupation of a sovereign state without prior authorisation by the Security Council. None the less, the ongoing violence in Iraq and the difficulties faced by the United States-led military occupation in the planned transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis have prompted widespread calls for a central United Nations role in this crucial phase.
5. The Assembly is committed to multilateralism and to a collective response to global threats. It is more than ever convinced that a multilateral system founded on the United Nations and its charter is the only way to meet the complexity of today's challenges, be they "soft" or "hard" threats, or old or new in nature.
6. As regards institutional reform, the Assembly agrees on the need for reform of the Security Council but urges a broader approach in order to give due weight to the other departments and agencies of the organisation, in accordance with the spirit of the charter.
7. In order to increase its legitimacy, the Security Council must be made more representative of the United Nations' membership. At present, the membership of the Security Council reflects the post-war world order which held sway when it was first formed.
8. While the transparency of working procedures has been improved, decision making in the Security Council must be rendered more effective in order to convince its members of its efficacy. The current veto system needs to be modified. The Assembly supports the proposal of the European Parliament to replace it by a system of "double veto" (veto only relevant if used by two permanent members) and only in the cases referred to in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter (threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression). The Security Council must find mechanisms for more effective implementation of its resolutions.

---

1. Assembly debate on 28 April 2004 (12th Sitting) (see [Doc. 10120](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee; rapporteur: Ms de Zulueta). Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 April 2004 (12th Sitting).



9. The Council of Europe member states which are permanent members of the Security Council, France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom, should take the lead by showing flexibility as regards Security Council reform in order to break the current deadlock.
10. The Assembly takes note of the General Assembly resolution on revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/58/126) and welcomes the efforts by its President to restore the Assembly's intended role as the premier decision-making and political body of the United Nations.
11. The Assembly considers, however, that a genuine revitalisation necessitates not just new rules and procedures to improve efficiency but also the introduction of a parliamentary dimension to the work of the General Assembly, at times called "the parliament of man". The parliamentary dimension could also improve the follow-up at national level to various United Nations' conferences and summits.
12. The Assembly notes the European Parliament resolution on the relations between the European Union and the United Nations (2003/2049, 29 January 2004) and it welcomes the proposal contained in it to jointly launch, with regional and world parliamentary assemblies, a network of parliamentarians to discuss major political issues related to the United Nations' activity and the challenges it faces.
13. Globalisation has had a highly uneven impact on the economies and the societies of member states while it has failed to bring economic benefits to all. There is therefore an urgent need for the United Nations to promote a fairer and better economic world order. To this end the Assembly supports proposals to set up at the United Nations an economic and social security council, thus providing itself with a politically legitimate platform to discuss global economic and social problems. It is also important in the pursuit of a fairer economic order that the International Labour Organization (ILO) enjoy the parity of effective enforcement that the World Trade Organization (WTO) currently enjoys. Furthermore, the Assembly believes that the Bretton Woods institutions need to be reformed and should receive direction and legitimacy from a newly created economic and social security council.
14. The Assembly also supports the initiative of the United Nations to draft a world charter of local self-government, being prepared by the UN Habitat Agency. This development, together with the establishment by the UN of an Advisory Council of Local Government is a sure sign of the intentions of the UN to give itself a stronger local authority dimension. The Assembly encourages the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to contribute to those initiatives.
15. The Assembly encourages the United Nations Secretary General to make full use of the expertise of regional organisations, such as the Council of Europe, in addressing global threats and in implementing the United Nations' various programmes and activities. The Council of Europe's experience in specific areas, such as building democratic security and stability, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, confidence-building measures, protection of national minorities, promotion of local self-government, promotion of equal opportunities between women and men, the fight against racism and protection of the environment can only strengthen and complement the United Nations' response to global threats.
16. The Assembly calls on the governments of the Council of Europe member and Observer states:
  - 16.1. as regards the United Nations General Assembly to:
    - a. give their full support to the General Assembly resolution on revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly (A/RES/58/126) and do their utmost to implement its provisions;
    - b. make proposals to enhance the authority of the President of the General Assembly by extending her/his mandate to three years and to consider electing a political figure to this post in order to give the General Assembly more political leverage;
    - c. include parliamentarians in their national delegation and endow them with the possibility of participating actively in the work of the General Assembly;
  - 16.2. as regards the Security Council: to adopt a genuinely constructive attitude towards making the Security Council more representative of the United Nations' member states, as well as in rendering its decision making more effective;
  - 16.3. as regards the United Nations' agencies: to contribute to assuring long-term financial viability for them;
  - 16.4. as regards the United Nations' relations with the Bretton Woods institutions: to improve the role the United Nations plays in global financial decisions by setting up at the United Nations an economic and social security council;

- 16.5. as regards the goals set by the Millennium Declaration: to honour the commitments they made in the year 2000 by providing the necessary financial resources for their implementation;
- 16.6. to make the election by member states of the chairpersons of the organisation's principal committees conditional on the candidate's national government having ratified and implemented the United Nations' covenants for the protection of human rights;
- 16.7. to set up at the United Nations an environmental and energy security council, to help face challenges such as energy shortages and global warming.