

United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

24 October 2002

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A new round of UN reform is before us. This time, it was initiated by the Secretary-General who prepared the report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" for our consideration. This initiative is widely welcomed by the Membership and certainly deserves great credit.

It is not only my view that the Report of the Secretary-General is very good, comprehensive, timely and useful. My office has had tens of bilateral meetings and consultations on the UN reform and the initial response has been very positive. The Report suggests a number of diverse improvements and innovative proposals that would make the work of the United Nations more productive and efficient.

I see the Report as an important impulse, to which we, the Member States, should react in a constructive way. The UN reform is not and cannot be perceived as a unilateral action. It is a process, in which, a joint effort of the Membership and the Secretariat is absolutely crucial for getting the reform started and agreed actions implemented.

As you know, the Report was issued a month ago and subsequently presented to the delegations at briefings organized by the Secretariat for the respective regional groups. The briefings have been greatly appreciated. However, there are still numerous open issues that need clarifications. Therefore, on the request of G77, I have asked Deputy Secretary-General, Madame Frechette, to participate in these informal consultations and respond to your queries. The main purpose of these informal consultations is to provide you an opportunity to ask questions, not to deliver statements. There will be the opportunity for expressing your country positions during the debate on 30 - 31 October. Please refrain from making statements today and let us focus on questions and answers so that an interactive dialogue can bring us more clarity and understanding into our forthcoming deliberations.

And now I have the pleasure to welcome Madame Frechette among us and ask her for some introductory remarks. Madam, you have the floor.