



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

9571st meeting

Monday, 11 March 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Yamazaki (Japan)

Members:

Algeria	Mr. Bendjama
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Ecuador	Mr. De La Gasca
France	Mr. De Rivière
Guyana	Ms. Benn
Malta	Mr. Camilleri
Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
Republic of Korea	Mr. Hyunwoo Cho
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
Sierra Leone	Mr. George
Slovenia	Ms. Jurečko
Switzerland	Mrs. Chanda
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eckersley
United States of America	Mr. Simonoff

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

Working methods of the Security Council

Letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2024/208/Rev.1)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)

Working methods of the Security Council

Letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2024/208/Rev.1)

The President: I would like to warmly welcome the Ministers and other high-level representatives. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Karin Landgren, Executive Director of Security Council Report, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2024/208/Rev.1, which contains the text of a letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Ms. Landgren.

Ms. Landgren: I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting Security Council Report to address this open debate on working methods. Security Council Report extends our appreciation to Japan as Council President and as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Security Council Report, as an independent and impartial think tank, has published five reports on Council working methods and has worked closely with some 50 incoming Council members to date, in line with our aim of supporting the Council's transparency, effectiveness and accountability.

In the New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General describes conflict prevention as a high priority, but as being chronically underprioritized. Establishing the facts and understanding their context are a critical part of conflict prevention. Agreeing on a set of facts is notoriously hard. In one of the post-conflict countries where I had the privilege to serve as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, local historians from opposing sides wanted to write their country's history together. But that sincere intention was thwarted by their inability to agree what exactly had happened to tear their country apart, and why.

The Council has many working methods that support receiving accurate and timely information, as well as for informal discussion. I will mention four approaches that the Council has already used to good effect: greater use of United Nations regional offices, in-depth Secretariat briefings, informal meeting formats such as closed Arrria Formula meetings and informal interactive dialogues, and deepened engagement with regional organizations. In that regard, I will also say more about the Council's relationship with the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council.

United Nations regional offices are a prevention mechanism. Each of the three regional offices briefs the Council twice a year, in the Chamber, in consultations, or both. It is nonetheless a limited engagement. The Council last visited the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel eight years ago, in March 2016, as part of its visiting mission to Mali, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. When the Council visited the Central African Republic in March 2015, it heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), but it does not appear that the Council has ever visited UNOCA or the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Also in the spirit of conflict prevention, the Council has previously sought regular in-depth briefings by the Secretariat. Those have varied from political briefings, given by the then-Department of Political Affairs, to

more holistic reviews of fragile situations, and even a daily briefing. Some Council members would like to have the Secretariat once again provide more analysis in closed, informal settings.

Members are very familiar with informal Council meeting formats such as the informal interactive dialogue. The Arria Formula meeting format has risked becoming tarnished, as it moved away from not-for-attribution information to the televised trading of jibes. More recently, some members have taken the Arria Formula meetings back behind closed doors and off-site.

As far back as the adoption of 2005 World Summit Outcome, Council members agreed to “expand consultation and cooperation with regional and subregional organizations” (*General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 170 (a)*), including by inviting relevant organizations to participate in the Council’s public and private meetings, when appropriate. At times the Council has used private or closed formats for engagement with regional organizations, such as last year’s high-level informal interactive dialogue with the League of Arab States.

With last December’s resolution 2719 (2023), on the financing of AU-led peace support operations, engagement with the AU seems poised to shift into higher gear. Resolution 2719 (2023) notes the need to enhance and align United Nations and AU efforts to address security challenges in Africa. Some of the actions it calls for apply to the two Secretariats, and the AU and the United Nations have dedicated offices here and in Addis Ababa that can coordinate to that end. But the resolution underscores the Council’s primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as for the oversight of the AU peace support operations it authorizes. For Resolution 2719 (2023) to be effective, surely the Councils will need to design a new and much closer way of working together.

It is with the AU Peace and Security Council that the Security Council has its most developed partner relationship. Since the joint annual consultative meetings began in 2007, an informal session has been added, and experts now travel to New York or Addis Ababa beforehand to negotiate the draft outcome. But those meetings of the two Security Councils are not yet a forum for candid, strategic or even routine exchange. With a shared interest in preventing conflict, and also knowing how hard it can be to maintain political

support for peace operations, there is a strong case for the Councils to hold more frequent, more interactive and less scripted meetings. The blueprint for doing that has not yet been written. Perhaps it could be the topic of a retreat of the two Councils during this year’s annual meeting. Such a retreat might also consider modalities for joint visiting missions, which have long been agreed in principle.

Let me acknowledge the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which is well-positioned to play a role in strengthening the relationship between the Councils. In deepening its ties with the AU Peace and Security Council, the Security Council may also be charting a path towards developing more strategic, informal dialogue with other regional peace and security bodies.

That brings me to my final point, which namely concerns the Council’s contact with the field. Article 34 of the Charter of the United Nations gives the Council a privileged role to investigate matters — in fact, any matter that “might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute”. The Charter’s language here is very broad. Members often find their field visits eye-opening, but the Council’s field travel still remains far from its pre-coronavirus disease pandemic levels.

Note by the President S/2019/990, on Security Council visiting missions, underlines that the members of the Council agree on the importance of conducting missions within a conflict-prevention framework to countries or regions with developing crises. In March 2017, the Council went to Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria by way of a fact-finding mission, described by its co-leads, the United Kingdom, France and Senegal, as intended to bring more attention to the crisis created by Boko Haram and to improve its own understanding of the humanitarian situation and the root causes of the violence. In October that year, the Council’s trip to Mali included a visit to the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, at a time when the Council was actively considering options for United Nations support to that entity.

In addition to incorporating visits to United Nations regional offices on such trips, the Council could consider revisiting countries whose missions have undergone transitions in order to draw lessons from them, including on preventing conflict recurrence, as it previously did in February 2019, in visiting Côte

d'Ivoire and also, while there, being briefed by the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia.

Presidential note 990 encourages sending smaller groups of Council members on mission and dispatching joint missions with regional and subregional organizations where appropriate. Small-mission formats confer flexibility as well as savings. In the past, the Council has deployed anywhere from a single Permanent Representative to travel on its behalf to sending half a dozen Ambassadors. The note encourages closer coordination of travel among the Council, subsidiary bodies and the Secretariat. The subsidiary body Chairs brief the Council on their trips, as have the Chairs of Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security

In conclusion, the profound geopolitical tensions of these times make it vital that the Council stay abreast of situations that may lead to international friction or give rise to disputes. Note by the President S/2017/507 has done much to advance better working methods. And as past Chairs of the Informal Working Group have underlined, working methods can do a great deal to help make the Council more effective, including by encouraging its members to seek to reduce polarization within the Council and to strengthen common ground.

The President: I thank Ms. Landgren for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Security Council today in my capacity as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Given the challenging political dynamics worldwide, the solemn responsibility of the Council to maintain international peace and security has never been more crucial. The effective functioning of the Council is essential for it to make timely decisions. For such decisions to be carried out, understanding and support from the wider United Nations membership are essential. In that vein, we, the Council members, need to remind ourselves that efforts to enhance the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's work are critical. What is at stake is not

only the Council's reputation and ability to fulfil its mandate, but the relevance of the entire United Nations.

Upon the Council's request, the Informal Working Group has consistently been deliberating on how to improve the working methods of the Council. As a result, a series of notes by the President of the Security Council have been issued. Since the adoption, in 2017, of the note by the President S/2017/507, which is the compilation of prior notes, 16 new notes by the President on the Council's working methods have been adopted. Many of them were issued in response to demands from the wider membership during the annual debates held since 2010, as well as in other forums. In particular, the adoption, in December 2023, of the note regarding the arrangement of penholderships (S/2023/945), demonstrates that the Informal Working Group is seriously committed to the improvement of the working methods and to hearing the voices of the Member States. In that regard, we also note informal exchanges of views with the wider membership on the introduction of the annual reports of the Security Council, in line with presidential note 507.

On 19 January I convened the first Informal Working Group meeting of 2024. As the Chair, I stated my intention to take a practical approach to realize the long-standing theme of enhancing the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. In that regard, it was agreed among the Council members to initiate an update to presidential note 507. It is the Chair's intention to build on previous efforts, incorporating all the presidential notes into one document for ease of reference, while streamlining, editing and, if necessary, adding provisions responding to contemporary needs, thereby improving the implementation of presidential note 507.

The invaluable views expressed during this open debate by the participants will be incorporated as much as possible in this ongoing process of updating presidential note 507. I am certain that proposals put forward today will help shape future discussions of the Informal Working Group. The Informal Working Group members welcome the constructive engagement of all participants today.

I cannot stress enough the critical role of the Council's working methods in making sure that it can deliver on its mandate. As Chair of the Informal Working Group, I will do all I can to ensure that the

Council can fulfil its responsibility and maintain the trust of the wider United Nations membership.

I resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Afonso (Mozambique): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council (E10), namely, Algeria, Ecuador, Guyana, Japan, Malta, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Sierra Leone, Switzerland and my own country, Mozambique.

We wish to thank Ms. Karin Landgren, Executive Director of Security Council Report, for her very valuable and insightful briefing and her very constructive inputs on improving the working methods of the Security Council. We congratulate you, Mr. President, for assuming the chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions for the year 2024. We wish you every success in your endeavours in that important capacity.

We, the elected members, are committed to a Council that demonstrates both the determination and capacity to take action. The Council must fulfil its mandate effectively, especially in these demanding and difficult times. We, the E10, are dedicated to collaborating towards a more transparent, inclusive and representative Council. That effort is crucial — not only for advancing international peace and security, but also for demonstrating the efficacy of the Council in today's global landscape and for restoring its confidence and credibility.

We therefore commend and thank Japan for the initiative to update the note by the President S/2017/507. We hope that this can be done collectively and in a practical manner. We reiterate that this living document requires continuous review in order to make it fit for purpose. In that regard, drafting new notes by the President in response to contemporary needs remains crucial for the Council's effectiveness. At the same time, it is equally important for the Council continue to update and streamline notes that no longer accord with the current reality, focusing instead on the efficient implementation of the existing rules and practices.

As reported by the Chair of the Informal Working Group, we have seen some progress in the working methods in recent years. In particular, the adoption

of the note by the President on penholdership (S/2023/945), initiated by the E10, demonstrated the will of the Council members to ensure the meaningful and effective participation of elected members in the drafting of the Council's outcome documents. The note encourages shared responsibility and fair burden-sharing and recognizes the value added by elected members. We welcome the incorporation of that note into an updated presidential note 507 and stress the importance of its implementation.

We reaffirm presidential statement S/PRST/2021/23. We reiterate that the Council should strengthen its engagement with the wider United Nations membership, as well as its cooperation and interaction with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and other relevant United Nations bodies, notably the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), as noted in paragraph 93 to 95 of presidential note 507. That also means more opportunities for all Member States, on behalf of whom the Security Council acts, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, to interact with the Council.

The Council should actively seek the valuable advice that the PBC can provide, including on preventive diplomacy and cooperation with local actors, regional and subregional organizations, in country-specific, regional and thematic files.

The PBC is uniquely placed to enrich the discussion on mandates and to provide valuable advice and cross-cutting perspectives. Some good practices are worth being codified in relevant paragraphs. That may include the practice where a Security Council member serves concurrently in the Commission as an informal coordinator and engages with Council presidencies on how the Commission can best support the Council's work, including by improving and utilizing the PBC's advice to the Council. It also may include the potential for cooperation on field missions. Security Council missions to the field are a valuable tool for the Council to understand, assess and prevent the escalation of particular conflicts or situations, as stipulated in paragraph 119 of presidential note 507.

We commit to and call on all Council presidencies to circulate and implement monthly working methods commitments, as stipulated in the note by the President S/2021/647. We welcome the continuation of that

practice and for that note to be incorporated into the updated note 507 to ensure its implementation.

Following a good practice of introducing the live list of speakers for open debates, as requested by the E10 and initiated by Mozambique, as then President in March 2023, the E10 encourages the consideration of utilizing a live list of co-sponsorship with increased visibility to enhance transparency. Both tools should be easily accessible.

The Council needs to strike a healthy balance between public and private meetings to both enhance the transparency and the visibility of the Council's work and encourage candid exchanges and the interactivity of discussions with a view to consensus-building. To that end, we support efforts to agree on elements to be communicated by the President, after closed consultations, as encouraged in paragraph 54 of note 507, as well as any proposal to facilitate more interactive discussion in a closed format.

We value Arria Formula meetings as a means for building trust by engaging informally with diverse actors, including civil society representatives and the broader membership, as noted in paragraph 98 of note 507. In principle and in practice, the streaming of Arria Formula meetings by United Nations Web TV should not face objections when requested by the organizers.

We also believe that the transparency and accountability of the Council should be enhanced regarding the documentation addressed to it by Member States. The provision and accessibility of information and Council documentation, including from previous years, to elected members needs to improve.

The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in the work of the Council remains a high priority. We insist on the need for integrating a gender perspective across the working methods. The shared commitments on women and peace and security supported by the majority of its members demonstrate important progress, and we encourage sustained efforts to implement them. We also encourage United Nations briefers to consistently integrate women and peace and security issues and a gender analysis into their briefings when reporting to the Council.

All efforts should be undertaken to increase gender inclusivity. In that regard, we note that current realities are not always reflected in the Council's basic documents. We strongly believe that the perspectives

of civil society, including women civil society briefers, bring an added value to Council deliberations, while fully respecting the intergovernmental nature of the Council. For the safety of civil society briefers, all efforts should be made to prevent and respond to threats and reprisals in coordination with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant United Nations and civil society partners. To that end, the E10 encourages further discussion including on how to promote best practices on the promotion of a zero-tolerance approach.

Targeted sanctions by the Council are an important tool for addressing threats to international peace and security. They are therefore critical to the execution of the mandate of the Council. We underscore the importance of accountability and transparency in the work of the subsidiary organs. Those working methods should align with international due process standards and should be continually improved.

We strongly believe in the need to strengthen the fairness and clarity of United Nations sanctions procedures, thus increasing the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions regimes. The listing and delisting of individuals and entities under United Nations sanctions regimes should be objective and evidence-based. We acknowledge the contribution of the Office of the Ombudsperson to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities in providing an independent review mechanism for delisting requests in the 1267 Da'esh and Al-Qaida sanctions regime and stress the need to continue efforts to improve its work. The E10 would like to reiterate its belief that the establishment and improvement of independent review mechanisms would strengthen the rule of law in United Nations sanctions regimes, taking into account the unique context of sanctions.

Panels of experts can provide valuable reporting on the implementation, evasion and circumvention of United Nations sanctions. The Council should work to ensure that the panels of experts have full and safe access for their important investigations and are not restricted in the achievement of their mandate.

As conflicts evolve, so should our collective responses. The Council should take into account the efficacy of sanctions through the evolving phases of

conflicts and adjust them accordingly. It should also emphasize that sanctions are not intended to cause adverse humanitarian consequences for civilian populations or adversely affect the humanitarian activities carried out by humanitarian organizations. In that regard, we recall the adoption of resolution 2664 (2022), which introduced cross-cutting humanitarian exemptions for United Nations sanctions regimes, and we underline the need for its implementation at the national level and the importance of its continued application to the 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2053 (2015) Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida sanctions regime. Furthermore, we note the importance of the role of sanctions committees in the effective implementation of resolution 2664 (2022) in assisting Member States in their understanding of the resolution and in monitoring its implementation.

Regarding the appointment by the Secretary-General of his special representatives, we stress the need for more transparent consultations with each of the E10 on an individual basis to allow enough time for our due consideration. We also encourage a stronger commitment to ensuring gender parity in appointments for those positions. The E10 underscore the critical and urgent need for comprehensive Security Council reform so that the Council can better reflect equitable geographical representation and contemporary realities. While the Council needs to be more effective, representative, legitimate, transparent, accountable and democratic, it continues to lack a truly representative composition. The E10 underlines the continued need to foster interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly in accordance with their respective mandates and the necessity for greater access by Member States to practical information and the institutional memory. Improving the working methods of the Council is a prerequisite for a more effective Council.

Working methods are also on the clusters of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Taking note that the Informal Working Group handles the working methods of the current Council and that the intergovernmental negotiations discuss the working methods of a reformed Council, we welcome increased communication between the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and the Chair of the Informal Working Group. We also welcome the General Assembly's recommendations to the Council, including on issues related to its working methods, notably those

recommendations contained in the resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

We remain concerned about the frequent use of the veto. The Council, in recent months, has failed to adopt important draft resolutions owing to the use of the veto. The use or threat of the use of the veto may prevent the Council from acting on vital topics, even regarding measures that have already been decided on by the Council itself in the past. We underline that such an attitude saps confidence in the institution and should be avoided. The use of the veto should also be adequately reflected in the annual report. The E10 reiterates its call for restraint on the use of the veto, especially on actions aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities, as outlined by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct and the French-Mexican initiative. The E10 also calls for restraint on other forms of veto in the subsidiary bodies of the Council. We call for openness to compromise, particularly in cases where unfounded objections may impede the work of the organs or of the panel or groups of experts and related process.

To conclude, we, the elected members of the Council, speak with one voice to reaffirm our commitment to the serious responsibilities and obligations entrusted to us through our election by the General Assembly. In that regard, we aspire and are committed to a Council that lives up to its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations, tackling the complex and interconnected threats to peace and security that we collectively face. We shall continue to work together towards a more transparent, inclusive, representative and effective Council for all, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to you, Mr. President, for chairing the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and for organizing today's meeting. We listened closely to the briefing delivered by Ms. Karin Landgren.

The Russian Federation has consistently supported the Security Council's annual discussion of its working methods in an open format. We firmly believe that holding a regular review makes it possible to identify potential for the further improvement of the Council's working methods and provides an opportunity for enhancing coordination between the Council and a wide range of Member States. The results achieved over

the years speak for themselves. Many of the practical proposals and initiatives that have been voiced by Member States in the Council Chamber formed the basis of the compendium of the Council's working practices, known as note by the President S/2017/507. Its importance cannot be overstated. It is actively used by non-permanent members as a source of information and remains an important tool in the Council's work. We are confident that today's discussion will contribute to the work of the Informal Working Group and that fresh, new ideas will enrich subsequent discussions in that format. That is, of course, on the understanding that the working methods themselves and any steps to modify them belong — and will continue to belong — to the members of the Council.

The matter of the Council's working methods is sensitive. We believe that any reforms in this area should be aimed at a real increase in the Council's effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out its main task, namely, to maintain international peace and security. The use of poorly thought through initiatives that fail to reflect the specificities of the Council's work is counterproductive.

We welcome the efforts of previous Chairs of the Informal Working Group to improve the Council's working methods. We are seeing the non-permanent members of the Council show an active interest in the procedural aspects of its activities. A great deal of work has been done since the adoption in 2006 of the first note by the President (S/2006/507). We welcome the Council's subsequent adoption of additional presidential notes geared to improving the effectiveness of the Council's work, including that of its subsidiary bodies. We share the aims of the current Japanese chairmanship of the Group, which are focused on the practical implementation of the note's positions, while pointing out irrelevant or obsolete elements. We are ready to contribute in any way to that painstaking work. However, we believe it should not be hurried. The efforts in that direction should be coherent and aimed at achieving consensus.

We regret the fact that the Council has recently been encountering increasing numbers of substantive problems in its work that require a serious discussion. It is no longer possible to attempt to conceal such blatant flaws with cosmetic measures. The Security Council's systematic exploitation by some of its members to advance their own geopolitical ambitions and further their narrow national interests cannot stand up to

criticism. Their active pressure has forced a growing expansion of the Council's agenda in order to include domestic political issues and problems related to human rights, climate and other areas that do not come within its purview. Those steps come cloaked in seemingly the best of intentions, expressed through a hypocritical pseudo-altruism, and tactical actions are portrayed as a desire to help the weak and resolve pressing issues of humanity, when in fact their aim is to put pressure on countries that do not conform to their wishes.

Against that backdrop, the real reasons behind destabilization and the spread of conflict are generally left unaddressed and deliberately swept under the rug. It is not surprising that the result is that certain United Nations missions are given unjustifiably broad and vague mandates. For example, we have repeatedly drawn attention to the inadmissibility of attempts to reformat the mandate for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq to incorporate tasks that are not part of a United Nations special political mission's duties, including issues around climate change or transboundary water disputes. We see persistent attempts to shift the responsibility for emerging crises onto others. After their disgraceful flight from Afghanistan, and having turned it into a hotbed of instability, a number of Western countries continue to manipulate humanitarian assistance on the pretext of unresolved human rights issues there.

We continued to believe that it is unacceptable to disregard the views and concerns of host countries using United Nations tools to exert pressure, which only results in a lack of trust in the impartiality and effectiveness of United Nations efforts, and puts in question the authority of the Security Council and of the Organization as a whole. The result is that the number of host countries that are trying to rid themselves of that presence is growing. When it comes reviewing or lifting sanctions on countries where the restrictive measures no longer respond to the evolving situation, our Western colleagues' policies are conspicuous. The use of sanctions as a cudgel with which to beat the Central African Republic, South Sudan and a number of other countries is the preferred method for putting external political pressure on them, albeit under an international United Nations umbrella. Every time, despite clear signs that the reasons for which the sanctions were introduced are no longer relevant, our Western colleagues find ever new "incontrovertible" evidence and arguments for letting them stay in force.

We also note that the penholders on the sanctions dossiers are frequently guided by the nature of their own interaction with any given country on the Council's agenda. They deliberately disregard their sovereign views and the positions of regional organizations, including the African Union, as well as their successes in stabilizing the situation in the territory and their legitimate concerns.

Regrettably, we are seeing a steady decline in the Council's capacity for constructive discussion and negotiations. Instead of seeking to solve difficult problems that genuinely demand both time and a willingness to compromise, Western penholders frequently intentionally choose the simplest path, thereby provoking a veto or abstention in the vote on a draft resolution. One example of that is resolution 2724 (2024), on a cessation of hostilities in the Sudan, which was submitted as an emergency measure and on a specious pretext by the United Kingdom and on which no in-person consultations were held, constructive proposals were disregarded and the process itself was rammed through. At the same time, there are blatant double standards when matters that are highly uncomfortable for our Western colleagues are under consideration. For months now the United States have effectively held the entire Security Council hostage by blocking demands for an end to the violence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict zone. Against that backdrop, our Western colleagues' attempts to compare the situation in Gaza to the situation in Ukraine look hypocritical, considering that they ask for meetings to be convened only on the latter.

Besides that, the question of the penholdership of certain dossiers is becoming more and more pressing. The penholders on a majority of issues continue to come from only three delegations. Despite the fact that they long ago lost their status as colonial powers, they came to believe in their own exceptionalism, considering themselves regional experts and appropriating for themselves the role of mentor in relation to other States and even regions. The views of host States and regional players, which often have a better grasp of the situation on the ground, and sometimes even of representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, are simply ignored.

An example of abuse of penholder status that still goes on is the methodology for agreeing on draft resolutions. The work is frequently held to an artificial deadline, which does not allow for a comprehensive expert study of the documents. At the same time, our

Western colleagues' preferred strategy for obtaining the desired results during voting is by putting pressure on anyone who disagrees, based on the principle of "he who is not with us is against us". The result is that we continue to have uncooked documents that fail to reflect key concerns of members of the Council, provide vague instructions for the Secretariat and whose aims and objectives are frequently unrealistic. That is not an approach that helps to resolve conflict effectively. Haiti is a typical example. As a result, the extremely poorly thought-out resolution 2699 (2023) on the Multinational Security Support Mission, which was adopted in September, has still not been implemented, and the situation in the country has become catastrophic. We warned about that scenario and were compelled to abstain on the question of launching the Mission.

Russia has consistently advocated for expanding penholdership, especially where non-permanent members are concerned. In that connection we welcome the launch, with our proactive participation, of consistent discussions on this question in the Informal Working Group. We pay particular attention here to the views of African States. We believe that a revision of the question of penholdership will help to enhance the effectiveness of the Council's work.

The question of an optimal balance between open and closed Council meetings remains relevant, and we have consistently advocated for observing a balance between them. Besides that, the Council's excessive documentation has been noted repeatedly. The Council produces several hundred documents every year, the added value of some of which, alas, is dubious. We are frequently seeing micro-management in resolutions, among other problems. We have always believed that Security Council products should be concise, laconic and clearly comprehensible. Most importantly, they should be action-oriented.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): Mr. President, we appreciate your convening of this annual debate on the working methods of the Security Council, and we thank the briefers for their contributions.

The substance of what the Council does is vitally important as it strives to maintain international peace and security. However, underlying everything that the Council does is its practice and procedure. The Council needs efficient, effective and transparent practices and procedures in order to fulfil its mandate. We welcome

the opportunity to discuss those issues at today's open debate.

First of all, we wish to express our deep gratitude to Albania for successfully chairing the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions during its term on the Security Council. Under Albania's leadership, the Informal Working Group had many significant achievements. Most notably, the members of the Security Council were finally able to agree on a milestone presidential note on penholdership (S/2023/945), after many years of an inability to reach consensus. The note will go a long way in improving the work of the Security Council. The adoption of the note shows that even seemingly intractable issues with which the Council is grappling can eventually lead to a consensus result. We hope that that achievement will be an exemplar for other progress that the Council can collectively make on working methods and other issues. We also want to congratulate Japan on assuming the chair of the Informal Working Group this year. We applaud Japan for its plan to update the note contained in document S/2017/507, the essential guide to and codification of the practice of the Security Council. The Council has adopted several free-standing notes on working methods since note 507 was last updated in 2017, when Japan was previously on the Council. The United States plans to engage constructively in the discussions on the update to that important document.

We trust that the outcome of the discussions this year will be a document that will help to make the work of the Council more comprehensible to incoming Council members, the full membership and the public at large. We recognize that the working methods of the Council can at times seem obscure or opaque. We all have a collective interest in ensuring that the Council is generally more transparent and that everyone outside of the Council better understands the processes involving Council meetings and products. That will only help to increase the buy-in and credibility of everything that the Council does. We very much look forward to hearing from non-Council members during this open debate. This debate is very timely, as the contributions of all Member States during the open debate today will be given consideration by the Informal Working Group during its review of note 507.

We know that many have been deeply frustrated by the use of the veto by the United States during the past several months. And we have been deeply frustrated by the use of the veto by other permanent members

over the past few years. This is not the time to focus on the substance of those vetoes. However, we note that the Council has been able to reach consensus on special reports to the General Assembly after every veto has been cast since the General Assembly adopted resolution 76/262, co-sponsored by the United States, which established a general mandate for the General Assembly to convene a meeting every time a veto is cast. The adoption of the special reports by consensus represents a measure of both Security Council transparency and respect by the Security Council for the prerogatives of the General Assembly.

I would like to conclude by reiterating our recognition of some unsung heroes. We deeply value the behind-the-scenes work of all of our colleagues at the Security Council Affairs Division, which provides the institutional memory and operational leg work of the Security Council. It is due to the Division's unseen work that the transition from presidency to presidency, month after month, goes so smoothly and seamlessly. And I do not want to neglect to mention the rest of the Secretariat staff, such as the interpreters, who are right now interpreting these very words into the other five official United Nations languages, and the conference services staff, who ensure that we are able to physically meet in this Chamber today. Each Security Council meeting is the outcome of a collective effort by so many people, from permanent representatives to political coordinators, to Mission experts, to Secretariat staff, working in solidarity towards a common end — the maintenance of international peace and security. And, ultimately, that is what the working methods of the Council are all about.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Ms. Karin Landgren and Ambassador Yamazaki Kazuyuki for their briefings. We also thank non-Security Council members for their interest and active participation in this meeting.

Working methods speak to our way of thinking. The Council's working methods reflect how we perceive and address the most thorny issues on the current international stage. They derive from distinct national policy positions and political considerations. They are not mere technicalities. In facing a volatile and challenging world, the Council's working methods must keep pace with the times, while demonstrating efficiency, effectiveness and transparency to help Council members in shouldering the responsibilities

conferred upon them by the Charter of the United Nations.

In the light of the most salient and recent issues on the Council's agenda, I would like to propose the following.

First, there is the issue of solidarity and cooperation. The Council is the most important international collective security mechanism, which means that Council members have a special responsibility for promoting international peace and security. As they are guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, they must respect and consult with one another on an equal footing and do their best to accommodate one another's legitimate concerns. They must constructively help the Council do what it is supposed to do and jointly maintain the Council's credibility and authority. When it comes to promoting political settlements involving flashpoints and resolving disputes through dialogue and negotiations, Council members should strive to speak with one voice, representing all United Nations Member States. The Council must listen to the prevalent voices of the international community and act in line with the overwhelming consensus of the broader membership.

Secondly, there is the issue of having a more rational agenda. Currently, the Council has dozens of standing items on its agenda. We must prioritize them so that we can formulate feasible and practical solutions to bring about positive developments on the ground. We support the Council prioritizing the wishes and priorities of host countries and regional organizations. In the light of the most recent developments, to explore a way to recalibrate the consideration of reports and mandate cycles related to current issues, as and when the circumstances require. That will ensure a more rational allocation of resources for better efficiency. We support the Council efforts to balance the holding of open meetings and closed consultations to demonstrate transparency and ensure candid communication. We are opposed to dedicating excessive amounts of our resources to cross-cutting issues and the duplication of work by the Council and other United Nations agencies.

With regard to authorizing sanctions, a case-by-case approach is advisable. Sanctions are a special instrument, the use of which is conferred upon the Council by the Charter. They are aimed at creating the conditions needed for a political settlement and must not be used as a substitute for diplomatic efforts. We must approach the use of sanctions prudently and

responsibly at all times and adjust or lift them as things change on the ground. Sanctions against countries such as the Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, and those under the resolution 1988 (2011), are obsolete and must be lifted in due course. With regard to countries in dire situations, such as Haiti, sanctions must be implemented more robustly to ensure that they have the impact that we intend.

Thirdly, there is the issue of improving penholdership arrangements. A small group of permanent members have long monopolized the penholdership for most agenda items. Some penholders have even at times placed their own national interests above the will of the Council, as a whole, during drafting and consultation processes, which has led to much controversy. Through our concerted efforts, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions adopted last year a presidential note on penholdership (S/2023/945), the first of its kind, in response to the call of most of the elected members of the Council and the broader United Nations membership. We have always believed that penholdership is a responsibility, not a privilege. Penholders should uphold objectivity and impartiality, listen to the opinions of all parties and strive to forge consensus rather than pursue double standards or engage in political manipulation. We recommend rationalizing and standardizing penholdership arrangements in line with existing practices as a way to provide guidance that can enable more States to take on penholdership and do it properly. We encourage more non-permanent members to serve as penholders. In particular, African members should be able to serve as penholders on African issues.

Fourthly, we should bring the important role of the Informal Working Group into play, and we hope that the Chair will regularly review the Security Council's working methods with a view to making recommendations on how to improve and enhance the Council's work in a timely manner. In an effort to introduce more predictability with regard to the annual open debate on the Council's working methods, we suggest convening it in the same month every year in order to attract greater attention from Member States. The legitimate concerns that a majority of Member States have expressed during these debates with regard to the work of the Council need to be taken seriously and properly addressed. We acknowledge Japan's efforts to prioritize an update to the note by the President S/2017/507 in this year's work. We are ready to work

with all members to enable the note to better reflect and guide the Council's work in practice.

Fifthly, regarding the veto issue, the original intent of the veto mechanism was to promote full coordination among members of the Security Council, especially the major Powers, in order to enable them to perform their duties more effectively. In the Council's practice, the reasons for the use of the veto vary from case to case. In most cases, however, it is closely linked to a lack of coordination among the major Powers and camp-based divisions among Council members. The root causes still lie in the Council's unfair composition and unreasonable structure. To tackle that issue at its root, we should push for changes at three levels.

First, we should increase the representation and voices of developing and smaller countries in the Security Council in order to make its composition more balanced and its decisions more fair and just and to minimize camp-based confrontations.

Secondly, we should continually improve the Council's working methods, which means we have to break down the long-standing monopoly of a small group of countries serving as penholders on hotspot issues. That also means stepping up coordination and dialogue among Council members and between the Council and the countries involved in conflicts, as well as regional organizations and other stakeholders.

Thirdly, the five permanent members of the Council should abandon the Cold War mentality, look beyond narrow geopolitical considerations, take the lead in strengthening solidarity and coordination and actively forge an international consensus that will enable the Council to better respond to global security challenges.

Improving the Security Council's working methods is a constant and continuing process. As always, China will fulfil its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council in good faith and work with all parties, starting with itself, to deliver consensus on the working methods, and with attention to the details. In that process, we will also continue to review our experience and broaden our ideas so that our working methods can better adapt to the dynamics on the ground, and so that in turn, the Council can better maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Eckersley (United Kingdom): I thank Ms. Landgren very much for her excellent briefing and for the invaluable and always excellent work of

Security Council Report. Let me also join my United States colleague in taking this opportunity to thank the Security Council Affairs Division for its tireless work and unrivalled expertise, without which we would all be lost. Finally, let me echo others in thanking Japan for its stewardship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. The United Kingdom supports the Chair's intention to update the note by the President S/2017/507 with the aim of bringing it up to date with today's practice and enhancing the Security Council's transparency and accountability.

Our goal is to have a Council that is able to solve problems, build consensus and, most importantly, as the elected members stressed today, to take action — all to carry forward our primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. To do that, we need to balance transparency and confidentiality, which at times requires closed-door consultations and in other instances needs to use the full breadth of meeting and dialogue formats, including private and Arria Formula discussions. We need responsible and equitable penholding, taking into account the views of the countries concerned and the States of the region, and making decisions on the basis that they will have real impact on the ground. We need strong relations and the right balance of responsibilities with the relevant regional organizations, including the African Union. We need to continue our practice of inviting relevant and competent civil society briefers, including women and youth representatives, in particular, to help enrich our discussions. And finally, we need to continue to find opportunities for the Council to visit conflict-affected areas to see the effects first-hand.

I am not now going to go through the litany of complaints about the West's working practices from the Russian Federation, the delegation that brought us Roger Waters as a brifer on Ukraine (see S/PV.9256). We are happy to address them in the Informal Working Group. But let me just say now that what is unhelpful and increasingly dangerous for the Council is the use of the Council as a platform for disinformation and revisionist history. We are concerned about the invitations we have seen to underqualified briefers and the use of the Council's time for spurious or vexatious debates, particularly when it is in the name of supporting a war of aggression that is in breach of the Charter of the United Nations.

As members of the Security Council, we should all have a stake in preserving its integrity and responding together to legitimate threats to international peace and security. For our part, the United Kingdom remains committed to working continually with everyone around this table to review and revise the Council's working practices in a collective effort to strengthen its effectiveness and efficiency.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and for the ambitious work you are doing in your capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

The Security Council remains the only multilateral forum for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the duty of all of us to make it more effective and more focused on action and results. The Council has been able neither to condemn the 7 October attacks nor to call for a ceasefire in Gaza despite the tragic situation there. Nor has it been able to stop Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, which has been going on for more than two years.

In the face of the growing numbers of crises, if we want to fulfil the mandate that has been given to us we therefore need to improve our working methods. Above all, that means striking the right balance between public diplomacy and working behind closed doors. Public meetings are useful because they enable greater openness and transparency. They also afford us greater opportunities to hear the voices of women and civil society, which we welcome. However, it is vital that we set aside time for exchanges behind closed doors in order to foster frank and direct dialogue between Council members, pave the way for negotiations and reach compromises. Hearing 15 different positions in a row is clearly not enough to enable the Security Council to fulfil its role, which is to reach single, collective, consensus decisions.

We need to do more to work collectively towards concrete, operational solutions to crises. France is doing its part by coordinating the Council's work on several files, and we involve all Council members closely in that work. Nevertheless, it remains clear that making improvements to our working methods can never replace the spirit of responsibility and compromise that remains essential to finding solutions to crises. Shouldering that responsibility means refraining from using the Council as a platform for disinformation,

weakening the platform by inviting fanatic briefers and inundating it with useless meetings. All such actions hamper the Council's ability to find solutions to crises and dangerously weaken its authority. Shouldering that responsibility also means engaging in good-faith negotiations and making necessary compromises so that the Council can effectively take action.

Finally, for the permanent members, shouldering that responsibility means that the use of the veto must be within reason. That is the purpose of the French-Mexican initiative for a voluntary and collective agreement to suspend the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities. That is something that the international community is very much hoping for. We call on all Member States, especially the permanent members of the Council, to join the initiative, which is now supported by 106 States.

Finally, an effective Security Council also means a Council that has undergone reforms in order to make it more representative. We call for the launch, without delay, of concrete negotiations on the basis of a draft resolution.

France will continue to work to ensure that the Security Council can fully and effectively fulfil its role.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than three minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphone will prompt all speakers to bring their remarks to a close after two and a half minutes.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Education and Sport of Liechtenstein.

Ms. Hasler (Liechtenstein): Let me first thank your delegation, Mr. President, for its long-standing and consistent commitment to improving the working methods of the Council. Japan has shown leadership on this seemingly technical, but, in reality, substantively very essential file for almost two decades now. We commend you for this, and are grateful to you.

Liechtenstein is a very small State and is one of 60 Member States that have never served on the Council. Nor are we presenting our candidature to serve on the Council at this time. But we are taking a keen interest in the work of the Council and have made it a priority of our United Nations engagement for long years. We have led on the veto initiative, which has resonated so

positively in the membership and beyond and is making a real difference in the work of the United Nations.

Our very keen interest in the work of the Council is driven by two considerations.

First, we believe that it is of essential importance that all members of the Organization have a sense of ownership in the Council's work — given that we have collectively delegated the work on peace and security to this organ.

Secondly, people in Liechtenstein view the United Nations primarily as a peace and security organization, which it is, of course, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. That is not to say that the Organization's work in other areas is not considered to be important. For example, its work in the area of disarmament, human rights and sustainable development is critical. Nevertheless, our people automatically look at the United Nations, generally, and at the Chamber, in particular, whenever there is a peace and security crisis of massive proportions — be it Ukraine, Gaza, Myanmar or the Sudan. Unfortunately, too often they are disillusioned by the inaction of the Council.

Our strong interest is an effective Security Council as a key element of our political commitment to the United Nations as such and to the purposes and principles of the Charter. For small States like us, effective multilateralism has never been more important — both as a matter of solidarity and self-interest.

The Council has made significant strides over the past decade or so with respect to inclusion and transparency, a development that has been mutually beneficial for the Council and for the membership, as a whole. Many of the improvements in the Council's working methods are the result of initiatives developed outside the Council itself. Non-members have taken a stronger interest in the work of the Council and have been able to increase their own expertise. That is thanks to platforms such as the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group and the work of Security Council Report, which we have supported from its inception. The more the Council struggles to make the decisions necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security, the more important the demand for accountability becomes.

We have delegated that critical work to the Security Council, and when it is unable to do what it should, it is

a collective failure for all of us — whether we are part of the decision-making process or not. Very often, of course, the veto is at the heart of political paralysis. We believe that we must not be merrily watching from the sidelines when the effect of the veto — whether through use of threat thereof — undermines the standing of the Organization and its perception as the most important peace project in the history of humankind.

The veto initiative is an important shift in the institutional balance among the political organs of the United Nations and the basis for empowering the General Assembly on matters of peace and security, as mandated under the United Nations Charter.

Efforts such as the ACT code of conduct, for which we had the honour of being a penholder and which is now supported by 130 States, as well as the French-Mexican initiative, are important political commitments to curtail the use of the veto. Every State running for Council membership should subscribe to them. Most importantly, of course, all of its permanent members should.

We should not think about expanding the veto power when it already has such a negative impact on the work and the perception of the United Nations. Instead, we should think about realigning the reality of the veto — which we will have to live with for the foreseeable future — with the purposes of the United Nations Charter, and we should think about an alternative course for action in situations of permanent deadlock.

We also believe that the drafters of the Charter showed great foresight in barring any party to a dispute from taking decisions related to that dispute. It is up to us to ensure the application of that important provision in practice.

We can all make a difference and a contribution to making the Council a more transparent, more accountable and, ultimately, better organ. We all must have a sense of ownership, both as delegations and constituents and because we are all affected by its action or inaction. We will continue making our voice heard in this conversation and look forward to continuing the discussions with one and all.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Gafoor (Singapore): I thank you very much, Mr. President, for convening this timely and important discussion. We commend Japan for taking

up the important work of promoting transparency and accountability of the Council as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We also thank the previous Chair of the Informal Working Group, Albania, for the good work done during the past two years. I also thank our briefer this morning, from Security Council Report, for her very insightful remarks.

We welcome the statement on working methods delivered earlier today by Mozambique on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Council (E10). We share the views of the E10 on this topic.

Please allow me to make some additional points in that connection.

First, it is important that we keep in mind that the Council's working methods is fundamentally about ensuring transparency, which is essential for the credibility of the Security Council and for the multilateral system, as a whole. It is true that there has been an increase in the number of open Council meetings, and we welcome that development. Notwithstanding that positive trajectory, the trend, it seems, is still for some topics to be discussed in closed consultations only. We understand the need for closed discussions to facilitate frank exchanges among Council members. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that the topics that are discussed in closed discussions are often of great concern to all Member States. We should therefore find a way to have their views incorporated and reflected in those discussions. We think that more effort should be made to convene some of those meetings in open format, allowing for the participation of concerned Member States. At the very least, if an open meeting is not possible, summary records of the closed consultations should be made available to the wider membership.

Secondly, the Council acts on behalf of the wider membership on international peace and security and should be accountable for its decisions. Singapore had previously suggested, pursuant to paragraph 129 of note by the President S/2017/507, that an exchange between the Council and the wider membership should take place when the annual report is being drafted. We are therefore very pleased that the United Kingdom has taken up that initiative. It convened an informal consultation on the annual report in January, and we hope that will become an annual practice going forward for future presidencies.

We also note that paragraph 138 of note 507 encourages the President of the Council in charge of presenting the report to the General Assembly to report to the Council members on relevant suggestions and observations raised during the General Assembly debate on the annual report. However, it is not clear to us if there has been any such reporting back to the Council members of the General Assembly debate. We would suggest that the Council members convene soon after the General Assembly debate to assess and discuss the General Assembly debate on the annual report of the Council. It is also important that a summary of that meeting of the Council be shared with all Members of the United Nations.

We also call on all Council Presidents to submit their monthly assessments pursuant to paragraph 136 of note 507, as those provide an important flow of information from the Council to the wider United Nations membership. In 2023, just 7 of 12 Council Presidents submitted their monthly assessments. There needs to be more concerted and genuine effort in that regard.

Thirdly, the effectiveness of the Council has taken a sharp dive in the past year. Just last week, we met in the General Assembly to discuss yet another veto which prevented the Security Council from issuing an urgently needed response to the conflict in Gaza. Since resolution 76/262 on the veto initiative was adopted in April 2022, we have seen 12 vetoes. That merits a deep reflection on the section on "Intra-Council Cooperation and Consultation" in note 507, including paragraphs 74 to 77. In particular, we think it is time to insert concrete ideas into the updated note, which Japan has indicated it will produce and which we welcome, in order to clearly articulate the United Nations membership's expectation for Council members, in particular the permanent members, to act in unity to discharge their responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Singapore also supports the French-Mexican initiative and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct on limiting the use of the veto against mass atrocity crimes. And we believe that Council members, in particular the permanent members, should abstain in the voting if they are a party to a dispute, in line with Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that Article merits further discussion within the context of the Council.

I conclude by thanking Japan for its continued efforts on this issue and look forward to practical reforms under its leadership. Singapore supports your intention, Mr. President, to follow up on today's debate through deliberations on an updated note 507. We call on all Council members, particularly the permanent members, to engage constructively in that initiative to improve the working methods of the Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to extend to you, Mr. President, my sincere congratulations on Japan's presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and to welcome your leadership of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We welcome your valuable briefing today, Mr. President, and appreciate your commitment to bringing this issue forward for discussion on an ongoing basis in the Security Council and the General Assembly, as a practical contribution to improving the Council's working methods.

Egypt welcomes note by the President of the Security Council S/2017/507 and other proposals that would contribute to improving the working methods of the Council and enhancing its effectiveness. We also welcome note by the President S/2023/945, adopted in December 2023, on penholdership in the context of the working methods of the Council. That is an important step towards making the Council more democratic, enhancing interaction between its members and broadening the scope of penholdership on various draft resolutions and statements by non-permanent members in order to ensure that penholdership does not become the exclusive right of a limited number of permanent members according to their interests. Attention should be paid to the views and priorities of other States, especially those that play important and influential roles in addressing the topics under consideration by the Council or those that are directly affected by them.

Egypt also supports the ongoing efforts to update presidential note 507 so that it better reflects new developments since its adoption in 2017. In that context, I would like to make the following points which I hope will be taken into account when considering updating note 507.

First, the number of periodic Council briefings to the general membership must be increased and the

views of all Member States must be taken into account in drafting the Security Council's programme of work. The Council must also present its activities and visits, and the Chairs of the subsidiary organs and their relevant committees should provide periodic briefings to the membership at large.

Secondly, the frequency of open meetings, in all their forms — whether in the Council, its subsidiary organs or Sanctions Committees — must also be increased. In that regard, it should be recalled that the Security Council represents and works on behalf of the membership as a whole. Therefore, as a general rule, its meetings and work should be accessible to all Members.

Thirdly, there must be genuine and serious engagement between the Council and the general membership. Members States should be provided with the draft resolutions and presidential statements before the Security Council, should be informed of consultations on them and should have the opportunity to express their views and make proposals to the Security Council concerning those draft resolutions and presidential statements, especially since many of those draft resolutions and presidential statements affect not only Council members but also many other Member States. In that regard, I will mention, for example, the current crisis in Gaza, whose consequences affect the entire Middle East and Arab Levant region. The priorities of neighbouring countries should be taken into account, and the Council should take the initiative to consult with neighbouring countries and ensure that their views and priorities are included in all aspects of its work on that issue and should call on them to engage with the Council on that issue.

Fourthly, there is a need for greater coordination among the Security Council, neighbouring States and regional organizations concerned by the conflict situations on the Council's agenda, in particular the African Union and the League of Arab States. The Council should not take decisions on specific issues without the involvement of the regional mechanisms responsible for monitoring those issues. The Security Council could benefit from the experience those mechanisms have naturally accumulated, which would enable it to make decisions that are more in line with the reality on the ground. In that regard, I would like to note in particular that resolution 2719 (2023) on the financing of African Union peace support operations from United Nations assessed contributions is an important opportunity to enhance consultations

between the Security Council and the African Union, together with its institutions, foremost of which is the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Fifthly, there is a need to promote consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, as noted in paragraph 91 of S/2017/507.

Sixthly, the subsidiary organs of the Security Council, in particular the Sanctions Committees and the relevant panels of experts, must consult with the countries concerned in preparing reports dealing with those countries.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that those proposals are not new. Their implementation and that of other valuable proposals that we have heard and will hear today remains contingent on genuine political will, especially on the part of the five permanent members of the Council. It is not possible to discuss the developments of the Council's work and mechanisms without talking about Security Council reform in a comprehensive way, in line with General Assembly decision 62/557. In that context, Egypt will continue to work diligently in order to reach the widest possible political consensus as part of intergovernmental negotiations for Security Council reform to guarantee the right of the African and Arab Groups to permanent representation, with all related powers and to non-permanent, fair representation proportional to the size of both Groups.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Romania.

Mr. Feruță (Romania): I would like to commend Japan on its long-standing leadership on the Security Council's working methods. We are particularly appreciative of the President's intention to produce an analytical summary of the proposals made during the present debate.

I would like to focus on some of the key issues.

First, the timely adoption of the programme of work is very important. While the Council has proved that it can continue its work without adopting a programme beforehand, this is a sign of functional issues. In addition to guiding the work of the Council, the programme also represents a public agenda for the outside world to see.

The second point that I want to make concerns the wide interest of non-Council members and other

actors in attending Council meetings. We see that as a positive sign of the authority of this body. Both rule 37 and rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure ensure such participation by decision of the Security Council, and we believe that it is in the interests of Council members to allow parties of interest to present their points of view, especially those who are affected by the unfolding events. Acting with transparency and inclusivity and ensuring the presence of a wide range of voices in Council meetings is key. We appreciate the opportunity to engage in the open debates, Arria Formula meetings and also in briefings, and we wish to see the inclusivity and equality of opportunities for all States to intervene. We appreciate the circulation of the compilation of written statements or summaries after such meetings.

Despite the often-evoked financial concerns, the practice of Council visits must be revived. Council members on the ground remind world leaders and the public about the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security. The issue of the implementation of Council resolutions, although not 100 per cent a topic for a debate on working methods, is an important one and is here to stay. The upcoming annual report of the Security Council, to be presented to the General Assembly, should have a section dedicated to this topic.

In considering how to make best use of the working methods, we must strive for better cooperation and complementarity between the Council and other United Nations bodies. This is the only channel to allow the Organization to speak and act with one voice. Improved communication, dialogue and information exchange between the Security Council and the General Assembly can bridge the gaps that hamper the efficiency of the Organization. As co-facilitator of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly during this session, Romania is committed to providing the adequate platform for further consultations with the membership aimed at strengthening the relationship between the two organs. We must remember that it is not a certain body or organ that fails to deliver. In the eyes of the world, it is the Organization as a whole that is held accountable for its failure.

I will conclude by stating the obvious: there is indeed a clear interest from Member States in having a more accountable, transparent and effective Security Council. We count on the Council to meet those high expectations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Novicio (Philippines): The Philippines thanks Japan for organizing this open debate during its presidency of the Security Council. We also commend Japan's leadership of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We also thank the briefer for her insights today.

In view of the rapidly evolving global security architecture, the Council must remain resolute in its commitment to enhance its working methods, improve accountability, enhance transparency and foster inclusivity. This is essential for equipping the Council to fulfil its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security effectively and competently.

First, the initial step towards improving its working methods is to correct the lack of representativeness in the Council. The Council should therefore aim for increased participation by non-members in the Council's decision-making process. To hear the views and recommendations of the general membership on international peace and security issues, the Council should increase the number of meetings, including its informal meetings, which are open to the general membership at various stages of consideration of a particular matter. That will further promote accountability and transparency and should enhance more active cooperation of the general membership with the Council on the implementation of decisions taken on such issues.

Secondly, the Council must observe the rule of law in all its proceedings. It must strictly adhere to democratic processes, practices and procedures, observe due process and guarantee fairness, justice and equity to all concerned. Among the essential elements of these guiding principles are accountability, fidelity to trust, predictability and transparency. While the Council remains the master of its procedures, it is important that these measures become more predictable and transparent, especially with respect to the Council's decision-making processes. That is crucial, considering that the Council operates under provisional rules of procedure. It is imperative that the broader membership actively engage in these processes in a meaningful way, not just in a token or perfunctory manner, as outlined in article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United

Nations, which emphasizes the Council's duty to act on behalf of the wider membership.

Thirdly, while the Council provides its annual report to the General Assembly, there is room for improvement. The Council should consider the requests of Member States, particularly those that are not members of the Council, to receive full information on issues discussed by it. The Council should also share all draft resolutions in blue with the wider membership before adoption, consider co-penholdership on all files, enhance systematic consultations with affected countries and institutionalize greater accountability of the use of the veto. That is in compliance with the requirements of the principles of accountability and transparency.

Fourthly, on the veto, the Philippines reiterates its view that the veto power has no place in a twenty-first century Security Council. The use or the threat of the use of the veto can constrain the Council from acting on vital issues related to international peace and security. Based on ongoing discussions, including at the intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform, it would be a challenge to remove the veto. In that regard, we should exert every effort and find ways to curtail its use, including through the French-Mexican initiative on the suspension of veto powers in cases of mass atrocities and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's proposed code of conduct regarding Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. Otherwise, the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council will always be under threat, especially at times of profound geopolitical rivalries and tensions.

The exercise of the right of veto carries an extraordinary level of responsibility and should not be employed without due accountability. It must be used judiciously to avoid undue constraints on the Council's primary mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Nasir (Indonesia): Indonesia congratulates Japan on assuming the presidency. We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this timely meeting on a key topic, not just for the Security Council but also for the whole United Nations membership. Addressing the working methods of the Council is important in our bid to create a Council that is more effective, efficient, transparent, inclusive and accountable.

Against that backdrop, I would like to underline two points.

First, the Council does not work in a vacuum, nor should it work in silos. The Council must create meaningful complementarity and foster better synergies with other United Nations bodies and subsidiaries, including the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council should also strengthen its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which will ensure greater coherence and better-targeted actions. It is also important to ensure close collaboration between the Council and those who are currently engaged in the efforts to revitalize its working methods, including the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. The Council should see advances in the discussions on those processes as low-hanging fruit to be used to strengthen its working methods.

Secondly, a firm adherence to the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and accountability should guide the Council's work, and the Council should provide more opportunities for all Member States to interact with its subsidiary bodies. It is also important to have an effective mechanism for ensuring that analytical reports are available on the trends in issues discussed in the Council, such as that of development in peace and peace operations. Moreover, the Council should do a better job of ensuring a more visible role for the 10 elected members of the Council during their membership, whether through chairpersonships, penholderships or other functions.

Finally, the permanent members of the Council have the greatest moral responsibility for ensuring that the Council responds decisively to grave situations. Mechanisms available to them, such as the veto initiative and emergency sessions, must therefore not be used to create an excuse for paralysis in the Council when it comes to resolving conflict, preventing atrocities and addressing humanitarian situations. By improving the Council's work, we are also taking a crucial step towards realizing a United Nations that is more responsive in addressing current and future challenges.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Zahneisen (Germany): At the outset, we would like to congratulate Japan on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We

very much welcome the initiative to hold an open debate today on working methods.

Transparency, efficiency and accountability within the Security Council's operational framework are not merely matters of presentation but are fundamental to the Council's effectiveness and, ultimately, its legitimacy. Germany has consistently advocated for comprehensive reform of the Security Council so that it can better fulfil its mandate. That reform must encompass two elements — first, changing the composition of the Council to reflect realities of the twenty-first century and to undo historic injustice, and secondly, reviewing the Council's procedures and working methods. We all know that reaching a decision on enlarging the Council will be a complicated endeavour, but that should not be an excuse for not improving, or at least trying to improve, its working methods. In order to save time, we would like to highlight three key points where we believe progress is achievable.

First, we have strongly advocated for a more systematic inclusion of civil society briefers in the Council's discussions for many years. We believe that the track record shows the quality of briefers' contributions to topics on the Council's agenda, as well as their impact on decision-making within the Council. The diversity of civil society briefers, however, could still be broader, especially with regard to women and youth representatives. Both have a legitimate interest in making their voices heard. They bring a unique perspective and new insights and creativity to the discussions that we believe the Council can only profit from. Security Council presidencies should therefore try, to the greatest extent possible, to facilitate their participation in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. And while we should encourage broad participation by civil society briefers, it is also our obligation to protect them. Any pressuring or intimidation of civil society representatives who brief the Council is inexcusable and simply unacceptable. In those cases, we expect the Council to speak up with determination.

My second point is on penholdership. It is our firm belief that the Council can only benefit from a more inclusive and transparent approach to penholdership. We have consistently advocated for a fairer distribution of responsibilities, particularly in favour of the elected members. We urge the Council to act decisively on that matter now.

Thirdly and finally, on the use of the veto, I want to echo what the representative of the Philippines just said in his statement. Germany will support all efforts and initiatives to limit the use of the veto. In particular, we plead for restraint in using the veto to block Council action aimed at the prevention and punishment of genocide, mass atrocities and war crimes.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Gómez Hernández (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain, as a member of the Uniting for Consensus group, aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy. I would also like to contribute some complementary reflections to our debate in my national capacity.

First of all, I would like to thank the Japanese presidency for convening this debate, six months after the previous annual debate on the working methods of the Security Council (see S/PV.9410). We consider it very positive that Council members are working on a new draft of the note by the President S/2017/507, and we hope those efforts will lead to an agreement.

We find the note by the President S/2023/945 issued in December, on the drafting of resolutions, especially relevant. We hope it will enable us to continue making progress on ensuring a greater role for elected members. We also support the statement made by the representative of Mozambique on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council, who we believe to be the true driving force for change within the Council. Spain considers it essential to improve the functioning of the Security Council in order to make it more representative, democratic and effective. That can be achieved only through dialogue, negotiations and open debates such as the one we are having today. I would like to now highlight three ideas that can be incorporated into the discussions and proposals presented today.

First, we must do everything possible to ensure that the Security Council functions in the clearest and most transparent manner possible. The application of presidential note 507 should be more transparent. We understand that the December report of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions (see S/2023/1014) is related to that idea. We also believe that the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly should contain an analysis of the Council's work, including the challenges it faces. We

support strengthening the cooperation between those two principal organs of the United Nations, in line with the annual resolution on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

Secondly, we believe there is scope for a more equitable distribution of work among Council members, especially where penholderships are concerned.

Finally, and in connection with what I have emphasized, we need to establish rules to ensure that any use of the veto is responsible and not self-interested. In that context, we call on all Member States to join the Franco-Mexican initiative, which advocates refraining from the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities such as genocide, crimes against humanity and large-scale war crimes, and to adhering to the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct. We call for the incorporation of both initiatives, among others, into the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. We also believe that we should deepen the path opened by General Assembly resolution 76/262, of 26 April 2022, to ensure accountability for the use of the veto. In that regard, we want to emphasize that Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations affects all members of the Security Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): I thank Japan for organizing today's debate.

The working methods of the Security Council are the guiding principles that shape the Council's day-to-day operations and are essential to its efficiency and to promoting fairness, objectivity, transparency and inclusivity — which are much needed, as we can see.

During its recent membership of the Council Brazil was deeply engaged in the discussions on establishing a more transparent and inclusive penholdership practice in order to enhance the Council's legitimacy and effectiveness. Brazil and the United Arab Emirates coordinated a proposal by the 10 elected members for a note by the President of the Council encouraging a more prominent role for elected members in penholderships and co-penholderships. That proposal was a fundamental step towards the adoption of the note by the President S/2023/945.

Enhancing the cooperation between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) is vital. The Commission's expertise in cross-cutting issues

and its bridging role recommend its increased involvement and advisory capacity during Council deliberations, especially concerning mandate renewals. A more structured and institutionalized practice of the relationship between the two bodies needs to be pursued. Brazil is committed to that during its PBC presidency this year.

The sanctions committees must comply with international law, including international human rights law, in listing or de-listing designated persons and entities. Listings must be strictly evidence-based. Individuals and entities must have the right to challenge their designation through an effective review mechanism. The mandate of the Office of the Ombudsperson should be extended to all sanctions regimes, provided that its working conditions are improved.

Poorly designed sanctions regimes often have a negative economic and humanitarian impact on the very people they intend to protect. Among other improvements, they should be bound by sunset clauses and subject to periodic review, as appropriate. Sanctions committees need to monitor the proper implementation of the humanitarian carve-out of resolution 2664 (2022), including in the context of counter-terrorism.

The appointment of special representatives of the Secretary-General and heads of auxiliary bodies of subsidiary organs requires transparent and individualized consultations with elected members. Such appointment processes must also observe gender and geographical balance.

Brazil reaffirms its commitment to the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women in decision processes regarding peace and security. We support the adoption of shared commitments on women and peace and security by Council members and encourage all briefers to incorporate gender-related issues into their presentations, recognizing the role of gender equality in achieving sustainable peace and security. As Chair of the PBC, Brazil is committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

As a matter of transparency, we also encourage as much as possible the participation of civil society representatives in briefings to the Security Council.

As threats to international peace and security evolve, so must the Council. Any debate on the Council's working methods must be underpinned by the overarching framework of Security Council reform,

which includes its expansion. In our model of reform, the number of both permanent and non-

permanent members should be increased. The gross under-representation of developing countries and non-representation of entire regions, such as Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, among the permanent members critically undermines the Council's effectiveness and legitimacy.

Brazil underlines the urgent need for genuine reform and calls on all Member States to support a clear path towards this goal, including through text-based negotiations. Only through concerted efforts can we ensure that the Security Council remains fit for purpose in the twenty-first century.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Ms. Brattested (Norway): I am honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the 27 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group.

We thank Japan for its continuing leadership. Improving the working methods of the Council and updating the note by the President contained in document S/2017/507 is not just a matter of housekeeping, but an imperative process in transparency and accountability and in ensuring the Council can better fulfil its mandate towards international peace and security, which is an inherent interest of us all.

We appreciate the important contributions of Security Council Report, both to our discussions today and more broadly. And we welcome the practice and the insightful content of the statement on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council.

The ACT Group would like to set out four concrete suggestions to update and implement presidential note 507. For the sake of efficiency, we will also transmit a more detailed written submission with additional proposals.

First, on building on existing agreements, the ACT Group would like to see a further commitment towards transparency and efficiency through the full utilization of digital tools to make the co-sponsorship of Council texts easier and the list of co-sponsors visible on the e-deleGATE platform, just as we do in the General Assembly. We believe this transparency would boost the level of support for Council texts and improve the

inclusion and buy-in of the broader membership in the work of the Council.

Secondly, in the past two years, we have seen and welcomed the Council's new utilization of special reports. We commend the Council's consistent publication of such a report, in line with General Assembly resolution 76/262, each time a veto is cast. We expect this to continue and believe this procedure should now be codified in presidential note 507.

We also welcome the response by the President of the General Assembly to transmit summaries of General Assembly discussions on the Council's annual report and special reports. It is the reciprocal duty of the Council to formally consider those summaries. They should automatically be added to the agenda of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, with the Council taking an action-oriented approach to these recommendations.

Thirdly, we are concerned about the practice surrounding rule 37 participation. A commitment could be made in presidential note 507 for presidencies to provide greater transparency to the membership on rule 37 requests and avoid undue limitations, committing to invite specially affected members, when requested as a default, for subsequent Council consideration. It is vital that Member States be given the opportunity to inform Security Council deliberations.

Finally, the ACT Group notes that presidential note 507 is devoid of any mention of the veto. We encourage new language on the inclusion of a dedicated section on the use of the veto in the annual report to increase the accountability and transparency of the Council's work.

As well as the recognition of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations and its principle of obligatory abstentions, by all Members, in cases in which they are party to a dispute, this Article, as all others, must be interpreted in line with the overall purposes and principles of the Charter, which we have all signed. We also remind Council members of the ACT code of conduct, which calls upon signatories on the Council, permanent and elected, not only to not vote against credible draft resolutions, but to support timely and decisive action to prevent or halt mass atrocities. Such actions include the drafting of products and calling for meetings.

In conclusion, we fully support the process of updating presidential note 507 to reflect the current

realities of the Security Council, including the reflection of gender inclusivity in the rules of procedure of the Security Council. The ACT Group looks forward to its continued cooperation in rebuilding trust and confidence in the Council's ability to shoulder its responsibility to international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to express our sincere gratitude to the Japanese presidency of the Security Council for having organized this important open debate on the Security Council's working methods. I would also like to applaud the excellent work carried out by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, under the stewardship of His Excellency Mr. Yamazaki Kazuyuki. I also wish to thank Ms. Karin Landgren, Executive Director of Security Council Report, for her valuable briefing.

Tasked with the primary and crucial responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has been working continuously to improve its working methods and interaction with all States Members of the United Nations. To that end, the note by the President contained in document S/2017/507 and subsequent notes have been a significant step forward for the Security Council in its reflection on the requirements of the twenty-first century and the challenges posed by new threats to international peace and stability.

We applaud the progress achieved specifically through the presidential notes that have been published since 2017, which attests to a steadfast commitment to the ongoing and practical improvement of the Security Council. We particularly applaud the recent initiatives aimed at improving the inclusion of the United Nations membership in the work of the Council, specifically in observing minutes of silence, ensuring the early appointment of the chairs of subsidiary bodies and presenting annual reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly. These measures, which are aimed at ensuring greater inclusion for all States Members of the United Nations and early consultations with them, are a significant milestone. Focusing on the consideration of documents ahead of time and providing sufficient time for consultations affirms the importance of preparation and active participation on the part of all Council members.

Morocco also stresses the importance of the Council's efforts to increase transparency and inclusivity in its work. We have noted with appreciation how all the presidencies of the Security Council have held meetings to discuss their programmes of work and the monthly results. We also welcome the opportunity to take part regularly in all these meetings, which enable us to have interactive exchanges with the Council presidencies, and we have noted the increased number of public meetings and briefings where that is possible. At the same time, we acknowledge that private meetings are crucial both in order to discuss sensitive issues or to reach compromises on thorny problems. Discretion is often necessary to facilitate frank and constructive negotiations.

As a contributor to peacekeeping operations since the 1960s, the Kingdom of Morocco recognizes the positive impact of Security Council efforts in maintaining, strengthening and sustaining peace. We attach particular importance to consultations between the Council and troop- and police-contributing countries and to triangular meetings that include the United Nations Secretariat, as well as to the development of preventive diplomacy, which is a vital complement to rapid and effective action for the maintenance of international peace and security and to promoting political solutions to conflict.

Morocco also emphasizes United Nations peacebuilding activity as a priority. In that respect, we applaud the continued growing cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its various country-specific configurations. We call for further strengthening the interaction between the PBC and the Security Council, which should ensure the systematic participation of the Chairs of the PBC and country configurations in Council meetings, and we call for their recommendations to be taken into account in Council decisions.

It goes without saying that improvements in the Council's working methods, thanks to concerted, inclusive reflection from all Member States — including through open debates, as is the case today — as well as Council members' affirmation of political will, are crucial to enhancing its mandate. It should be emphasized that the debates on the improvement of Security Council working methods go hand in hand with the Secretary-General's broader vision and the reforms he has initiated, which are aimed at improving the effectiveness and coherence of the entire United Nations

to better tackle global current challenges, and which will be at the heart of the discussions of the Summit of the Future, to be held in September. Morocco, as an active member of our Organization, is determined to continue contributing constructively to this discussion and supporting initiatives to improve working methods and the functioning of the Security Council.

In conclusion, I would like to pay a warm tribute to the Security Council Affairs Division for its work. Through its reports and analyses and its accessibility to Member States, it has contributed substantially to the improvement of the Council's working methods.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

Mr. Laursen (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic States — Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark.

Let me commend the presidency of Japan for convening today's open debate and for its efforts as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

The Nordic States remain committed to ensuring a transparent, accountable and effective Security Council that is more representative of the current United Nations membership and reflective of today's world. We regret that lately the Council has been unable to act on important matters of international peace and security, and we call on it to act in accordance with its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. The legitimate concerns about a lack of transparency, coupled with a lack of results in response to various ongoing crises, have called the Council's effectiveness, and thereby its legitimacy, into question. To improve its performance, the Nordic States would like to highlight three priority areas that we believe should receive the Council's attention when it revises the note by the President S/2017/507.

First, non-Council members' participation should be broadened. We have been observing a shift towards limiting participation under rule 37. Member States should be given the opportunity to inform Council deliberations more frequently and based on relevant and transparent criteria. The presidency must ensure transparency around requests for rule 37 invitations and whether or not they are granted. If time constraints are a concern, preference could be given to group statements.

Secondly, the Council's work on conflict prevention should be enhanced. To that end, it should strengthen its coordination with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), including by undertaking joint field visits and joint briefings for countries and regions that are on both bodies' agendas. We also support the alignment of country- or region-specific meetings of the PBC with the Council's programme of work on those areas.

Thirdly, the Council should consider further democratizing its procedures, for example by adding to co-penholderships for elected members, in line with the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. We welcome the recently agreed note on penholdership and co-penholdership (S/2023/945) and look forward to its incorporation into an updated presidential note 507.

We would like to remind Council members of the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, which calls on all of its signatories that are permanent or elected members of the Council not only to refrain from voting against credible draft resolutions, but also to support timely and decisive action to prevent or halt mass atrocities. Progress in those key areas will be crucial to rebuilding public trust in the Council's important work, and to realizing its potential and promise to act resolutely on threats to international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Van Schalkwyk (South Africa): I want to convey our best wishes to Japan in its stewardship of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We would also like to thank Ms. Karin Landgren for her briefing at this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council.

Today's debate is opportune, as it comes at a time when the Security Council is contending with complex conflict situations and efforts to find lasting solutions to them. South Africa remains supportive of efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council, with a view to enhancing its efficiency and agility in its mandate for maintaining international peace and security. In that regard, we concur with continued efforts to regularly review the working methods of the Security Council in order to improve how it conducts its affairs and implements its mandate.

Significant progress has been made to develop partnerships and enhance cooperation between the

United Nations and regional organizations such as the African Union (AU). That partnership, premised on the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, has proved valuable in finding innovative approaches to preventing and resolving conflicts collectively. We encourage deepening that cooperation towards the prevention and resolution of conflicts on the African continent. In that context, we welcome the important step that the Security Council has taken in adopting resolution 2719 (2023), which is designed to make assessed contributions available for peace operations led by the African Union. We also welcome the regular annual consultations between the Security Council and the African Union and encourage in-depth discussions on conflict situations on the continent. Similarly, we highlight the importance of timely agreement on the joint communiqué of the annual consultations, which are key to joint efforts to promote peace.

Early engagement in the work of the Council is important for every incoming member and includes briefings by the Secretariat conducted earlier in the preparation for membership. We welcome the fact that, based on the previously adopted presidential note, incoming members are now able to receive all Council communications for a period of five months before joining the Council. We urge that, during the observation period, incoming members be made able to observe the work of the Council in various settings, including in consultations and negotiations of Council outcomes.

In order to ensure that the good progress made on the adoption of additional notes continues, we highlight the importance of the further development and conclusion of outstanding notes, such as the note on co-penholdership. We emphasize the importance of burden-sharing in that regard, which is vital for sharing perspectives and for improving the efficiency and inclusivity of the Council's work. In that context, we reiterate that the automatic assumption of the role of chairs of subsidiary bodies as co-penholders on related dossiers is essential.

The comprehensive implementation of note 507 and subsequent presidential notes remains important to the continued evolution of the work of the United Nations in these complex times.

Over the past five months, we have witnessed the Security Council's inability to act to find a lasting solution to the conflict in Gaza, in respect of which a

veto was used by one of the permanent members three times against Security Council resolutions calling for a humanitarian ceasefire. In that regard, South Africa wishes to reiterate its call for the reform of the Security Council in order to improve not only its working methods but its effective response to conflict situations and the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Greece.

Mr. Sekeris (Greece): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for the organization of this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council. I would also like to wholeheartedly thank the Executive Director of Security Council Report, Ms. Landgren, for the very interesting briefing. In addition, I would like to commend Japan for all its work in preparing and updating the interactive Handbook on the Working Methods of the Security Council since 2006, as well as for its digitalization.

As a candidate for membership in the Security Council for the 2025–2026 term, Greece cannot but consider the improvement of the working methods of the Council as an issue of high importance, and therefore participates consistently in the relevant debates, as we did last September (see S/PV.9410 (Resumption 1)).

Indeed, to refer to the first guiding question in the concept note (S/2024/208/Rev.1, annex), the improvement of the working methods does play a role in the Council's ability to fulfil its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Through the improvement of its working methods, the Security Council can enhance its efficiency, transparency, effectiveness and accountability, thereby fulfilling its aforementioned role more effectively.

Concerning the second guiding question, my country believes that the existing provisions of the revised presidential note contained in document S/2017/507 and its additional stand-alone presidential notes should be fully implemented. More specifically, Greece wishes to highlight the importance of the full implementation of the provisions related to, *inter alia*, the monthly programme of work and monthly forecast, meetings, informal consultations of the whole, the drafting of outcome documents, dialogue with non-Council members and bodies and Security Council missions. In that vein, Greece welcomes the first meeting of the Informal Working Group on

Documentation and Other Procedural Questions for 2024, held on 19 January, which further boosted the discussion on a better implementation of that note.

With regard to the third guiding question, Greece supports, in principle, the idea of including further provisions that can contribute to the improvement of the working methods of the Council. In this context, allow me to recall seven selected ideas that we already presented during a previous discussion in this Chamber (see S/PV.9410 (Resumption 1)).

First, we share the view of many Member States that the Council should officially adopt its rules of procedure.

Secondly, we support improving the interaction between the Council and its subsidiary bodies, such as the Peacebuilding Commission, to name only one, along with other main organs of the United Nations and other regional organizations, including the European Union.

Thirdly, we support ensuring more substantive and efficient interaction during the Council's open debates.

Fourthly, we share the view that the reports of the President of the Council to the President of the General Assembly pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/262, which initiated the so-called veto initiative, should be more analytical and in-depth in order to provide the broader membership with the background and possible rationales behind the casting of a veto.

We also stress the importance of the Council going back to conducting missions to the field more often.

Furthermore, we believe that closer consultation by the Council with the Member States that are directly affected by resolutions is helpful.

Lastly, we encourage the Council to take measures to ensure the safe and meaningful participation in Council meetings of civil society briefers, including women, while protecting them from retaliation and threats of violence.

In conclusion, I would like to reassure the Council that Greece, if elected as a non-permanent member of the Council, stands ready to participate actively and constructively in the discussions on improving the Council's working methods, especially with a view to putting into practice the aforementioned ideas, in line with the provisions of the updated presidential note 507.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Massari (Italy): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this relevant debate.

We are all convinced that a more transparent and functional Security Council is an absolute necessity in order to regain the public's trust in the capacity of the United Nations to ensure international peace and security. The working methods of the Security Council play a crucial role in the Council's ability to fulfil its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. The most recent developments — with important processes blocked by vetoes and documents requiring consensus, such as presidential statements, also remaining stalled using the current methods of work — make today's open debate even more timely and necessary.

We commend your endeavour, Sir, as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. In particular, we appreciate the fact that the Informal Working Group has been striving to ensure the implementation of the presidential notes and the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, and will work on updating the revised presidential note 507 (S/2017/507), which addresses the demand for the Council's enhanced transparency, inclusiveness and interaction with the rest of the United Nations membership. Much has been done in that regard to date, but we can all agree that there are margins for further improvement. We look forward to hearing positive developments in that regard soon.

We are convinced that, within the Council, permanent and non-permanent members should work on an equal footing as much as possible. More generally, the 10 elected members of the Council should be allowed to play a greater role in the work of the Security Council. The distribution of duties among Council members should be fairer and more balanced when it comes both to the chairing of subsidiary bodies and the practice of penholdership and co-penholdership. Moreover, it is essential that the views and interests of the Member States affected by or concerned with any matter on the Council's agenda be heard and taken into account in its work. It is essential to increase cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and we look forward to seeing the Council regularly request, deliberate on and draw upon the PBC's specific, strategic and targeted advice.

We also strongly support the practice of inviting briefers from civil society to Council meetings, ensuring the adequate participation of women and greater gender inclusivity and equality in order to allow Council members to hear different voices and points of view before deliberating. Furthermore, it is important to hold public meetings of the Security Council whenever possible, while keeping closed meetings and informal consultations to a minimum, in accordance with the fact that they were originally intended to be the exception.

The improvement of working methods is also part of the broader discussion on the comprehensive and effective reform of the Security Council, which should be aimed at a more transparent, democratic, efficient and, in our view, also more accountable Security Council. It is hard to speak of working methods without reflecting at the same time on the root causes of the Council's inaction, which are directly and closely linked to the veto, regardless of whether it is actually used or simply threatened.

That is why Italy supports all initiatives aimed at self-restraint with regard to the exercise of the veto, such as the Franco-Mexican initiative and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group code of conduct. Italy was also among the co-sponsors of the innovative General Assembly resolution 76/262, known as the veto initiative, spearheaded by Liechtenstein. It is also the reason that we do not support the expansion of the Security Council in the category of permanent members, as that would generate additional veto powers and further discrimination and divisions among permanent and non-permanent members, thus making it less efficient, less democratic and less accountable to the general membership.

Finally, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the Council, Italy would welcome the proper application of the provision under Article 27, paragraph 3, of the United Nations Charter, pursuant to which any member of the Council involved in a dispute, including the permanent members, should abstain from voting on decisions related to that dispute.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mrs. Kamboj (India): I wish to thank the delegation of Japan for organizing an open debate on this important topic. I also wish to thank Ms. Landgren for her briefing.

Since this United Nations organ is tasked with the maintenance of international peace and security, today's debate on working methods remains extremely relevant, especially against the backdrop of Ukraine and Gaza. As such, the question of how much the Security Council has been able to deliver on peace and security, given that it has both feet firmly fixed in the past, is a larger question that the Member States need to collectively ponder.

In that collective reflection, one major aspect, which is one of the five clusters of the intergovernmental negotiations, is the working methods. The edifice of the working methods of the Council is erected on the nebulous expanse of rules of procedure that remain provisional, even now.

At a micro level, as an eight-term elected member of the Security Council, we would like to submit five key issues of concern.

Firstly, on the Council's engagement with the wider membership and as mandated by Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, one of the meaningful ways of doing that would be through a discussion on the annual report of the Security Council in the General Assembly. However, despite long-standing demands for analytical *reportage*, the reports remain simply factual markers indicating the number of times the Council has met or the total debates that have been conducted.

Secondly, let us turn to the subsidiary bodies inhabiting a subterranean world, with their own custom-made working methods and obscure practices that do not find any legal basis in the Charter or any of the Council's resolutions. For instance, while we do get to know of the decisions of the Committees on listing, the decisions on rejecting listing requests are not made public. That is a disguised veto, but an even more impervious one, and it merits a discussion among the wider membership. For genuine, evidence-based listing proposals for globally sanctioned terrorists to be blocked, without giving any due justification, is uncalled for and smacks of double-speak when it comes to the Council's commitment to tackling the challenge of terrorism.

Thirdly, the selection of the Chairs of the Security Council's subsidiary bodies and distribution of penholderships must be made through a process that is open, transparent, is based on exhaustive consultations and has a more integrated perspective. The five permanent members of the Security Council (P5)

must absolutely honour the consensus of the 10 elected members of the Security Council (E10) on the Chairs of subsidiary bodies to be assumed by the E10 themselves.

Fourthly, as one of the largest troop-contributing countries, my delegation would like to reiterate that the concerns of the troop- and police-contributing countries should be taken into consideration for better implementation of peacekeeping mandates.

Fifthly, there is a need to review the agenda of the Council and remove obsolete and irrelevant items. The note by the President S/2017/507, on procedural matters, provides ample guidance on that.

In a nutshell, General Assembly decision 62/557, subscribed to by all Member States, identifies five pillars for comprehensive reform, one of which is improving the Council's working methods. However, it is also imperative to note that working methods do not stand in isolation, as they have an organic linkage to other clusters, including on the relationship with the General Assembly and discussions on the veto. Therefore, unless we address the issue in its entirety, a piecemeal approach would fail to offer a holistic solution.

In addition, as we discuss the working methods, we are also witnessing a lack of equitable representation in the Security Council, between the P5 and E10. What we therefore need is a Security Council that better reflects contemporary realities — the geographical and developmental diversity of the multipolar world of today, including the voices of the developing countries and unrepresented regions, like Africa, Latin America and the vast majority of Asia and the Pacific. For that, an expansion of the Council in both categories of membership is absolutely essential.

We can no longer hide behind the smokescreen of the intergovernmental negotiations by delivering entrenched national positions in a process that has no time frame and no text. We should embark upon the only established process in the United Nations — engaging in negotiations based on text and not through speaking at each other or past each other, as we have done for the past three decades.

As the threats to international peace and security evolve, so must the Council. We ask those blocking progress on this vital issue to heed calls for genuine reform and to contribute to making the Council truly fit for purpose for the twenty-first century.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Ms. Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica welcomes the convening of this open debate and congratulates Japan for its traditional leadership in structuring the working methods of the Council.

Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Norway, on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, and the statement to be delivered by the representative of Ireland, on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions.

In my national capacity, allow me to highlight three aspects.

First, Costa Rica commends the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and its decision to publish annual reports. However, its contribution can go further. For Costa Rica, the publication of the Group's annual reports provides a platform for addressing important procedural issues that arise in the Security Council throughout the year, such as procedural votes or the formulation of new agenda items, which are not currently being included in the annual report.

Secondly, Costa Rica is concerned that very few Council presidencies submit their monthly assessment reports. Costa Rica recalls that, pursuant to the note by the President S/1997/451, those assessments are carried out:

“under their own responsibility and following consultations with members of the Council for the month during which they presided and which should not be considered as representing the views of the Council”.

It is essential that Council members once again commit to the transparency and original spirit of presidential note 451 in order to ensure proper accountability and promote global security cooperation.

Thirdly, Costa Rica supports all proposals aimed at making the Council's monthly programme of work comprehensive. In particular, we call on all Council presidencies to continue to disseminate and implement their commitments with regard to working methods and invite them to make a detailed reference on that point at the wrap-up meeting at the end of their presidencies.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Vasconcelos y Cruz (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome the convening of this open debate, and I recognize the valuable contributions of the delegation of Japan to the revision and improvement of the working methods of the Security Council. We must recognize that so far it has primarily been the elected members of the Security Council who have made the most of their membership to promote improved working methods. That task should also be shared by the permanent members. Given the serious international circumstances in which this meeting is taking place, I would like to discuss two issues in particular.

First, judging by the frequency with which participating delegations have referred to this issue, it is obvious that the abuse of the veto by some permanent members is a central problem in the Council's work. Unfortunately, the veto is seen as a right and not a responsibility, and that is having serious consequences for international peace and security and for the credibility of the Council itself. The Council has frequently shown itself to be inadequate to its mandate, and it has allowed crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide to happen without any timely action being taken by the international community. Whether the issue is about efforts to avoid a ceasefire in Gaza or in Ukraine, the Council's paralysis has translated into death and destruction. Any permanent member who exercises the veto to override the will of the majority should have to pay the political and historical price that such action involves. Thanks to General Assembly resolution 76/262, we, the States Members of the United Nations, now have a chance to hear explanations from those who have blocked the Council's action. If we are to continue to see accountability, we believe it is essential to ensure that the report of the Security Council to the Assembly includes a special section on the use of the veto. In addition, we urge all States that have not done so to join the initiatives on limiting the use of the veto, including the French-Mexican initiative to restrict its use in cases of mass atrocities, which has been endorsed by 106 States.

Secondly, we reiterate the need for greater transparency in communications submitted to the Security Council invoking legitimate self-defence based on Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. It is very concerning that in addition to ambiguous language in recent Council resolutions, that practice

creates a de facto risk of increasing the exceptions to the general ban on the use of force expressed in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter and therefore of going against its spirit. Since 2018, Mexico has submitted a proposal to the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization to examine this issue, which has generated greater interest and support every year. We hope that the Council will revise and modify its working methods in tandem with that. When a State invokes the inherent right of legitimate self-defence based on Article 51, the Council should communicate that information in a timely and transparent fashion to the entire membership, and should report on how it follows up on communications that it receives under the article. This issue has become even more urgent in the light of the increase in invocations of Article 51 regarding actions against non-State actors, including in the first few months of this year. The Council must ensure that it maintains the order and legality established in the Charter of the United Nations at all times.

Historically, Mexico has urged the Council to carry out its mandate effectively and transparently. We believe it is essential to recall that the Charter of the United Nations establishes that the Council acts on behalf of all Member States. In our view, that authority implies the obligation to be accountable to the entire membership of the Organization, and the Council's working methods should contribute to that end.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Jadoon (Pakistan): We thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, and we also thank the briefer for her insightful remarks.

Responding decisively to the increasingly complex challenges to global peace and security requires the Council to act in an effective, transparent, accountable and democratic manner. Securing improvements to the Council's working methods is an integral part of the ongoing effort to comprehensively reform it through the intergovernmental negotiations process. While we continue to strive and hope for consensus in that effort, it is also imperative that the Council itself address its working methods in order to improve its functioning, including through the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. I would like to discuss some of the key improvements

to the working methods of the Council that we believe are required.

First, the most significant improvement would be the Council's full adherence to openness and transparency. Rule 48 of its provisional rules of procedure stipulates that "[u]nless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public". Closed consultations of the Council were therefore envisaged to be an exception rather than the norm.

Second, the absence of an interactive discussion in open meetings — beyond reading out statements articulating public postures — compromises the Council in its mandated role, particularly its duty to act on behalf of all Member States. It renders its work opaque and robs the wider United Nations membership of the opportunity to appreciate and scrutinize the positions taken by various Council members. It also opens it up to back-door deals and pressure tactics, while enhancing the possibility of undue influence by its permanent members.

Third, there is a need to ensure full transparency, including by enhancing the quality and frequency of reporting to the General Assembly pursuant to Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter and by holding public meetings and debates.

Fourth, there should be inclusivity in the Council's deliberations, allowing the automatic participation of non-Council members at their request.

Fifth, the penholder system should be eliminated or reformed.

Sixth, there should be a democratic process for appointing the Chairs of subsidiary bodies.

Seventh, the Council should ensure greater transparency and non-discrimination in its counter-terrorism and sanctions regimes by reforming them to establish due process and effective remedy in their implementation.

The Charter assigns the Security Council and the General Assembly distinct but complementary roles. It is vital to uphold and respect the General Assembly's role as the principal deliberative, policymaking and norm-setting organ of the United Nations. We should all be seriously concerned about the Security Council's continuing encroachment on the functions and powers of the General Assembly, especially through its attempts to set legal norms and establish definitions for

various issues that are squarely within the purview of the Assembly.

Finally, nothing undermines the credibility of the Council more than the selective implementation and non-implementation of its resolutions. The Council should seriously consider how it can ensure the implementation of its resolutions, especially on long-standing issues and disputes on the agenda. Failure to enforce its resolutions undermines the credibility of the Security Council and erodes confidence in its ability to fulfil the responsibilities assigned by the Charter of the United Nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Chindawongse (Thailand): I wish to congratulate Japan on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March and for convening this important open debate.

A united, effective and transparent Security Council is a critical component of the United Nations architecture to promote and maintain international peace, security and stability, which is essential to promoting sustainable development. Unity, effectiveness, transparency — those can be facilitated through the important process of the reform of the Security Council. And on that matter, Thailand supports the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, because as we can all agree, Security Council reform is urgently needed.

Among various aspects of the reform of the Security Council, Thailand believes that the improvement of the working methods is an endeavour that can generate quick wins. Those low-hanging fruits can enhance the Council's effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and even unity.

On that matter, we recognize the central importance in the Council's work of note by the President S/2017/507 and the importance of other subsequent related notes, as well as the ongoing efforts of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Question. Those notes and efforts have helped to contribute to better working methods for the Council and have improved the interaction between the Council and the wider United Nations membership.

There are several important principles that I would like to underscore.

First, on intra-Council processes, we welcome the greater efforts to ensure openness, shared responsibility and fair burden-sharing within the Council. In that connection, we support greater penholdership or co-penholdership for non-permanent members of the Council and especially for developing countries.

We also support greater transparency in information sharing within the Council, so that all Council members can engage effectively in shaping and implementing the Council's agenda. We are thus encouraged by the progress, as encapsulated in the note by the President S/2023/945 of 1 December 2023.

Secondly, with regard to interaction between the Council and the wider membership, Thailand sees the need for striking the right balance between the Council's confidentiality and transparency. We understand that sometimes, confidentiality is necessary for success. But Thailand also believes that when there is greater and more timely information-sharing between the Council and the wider membership, the result can be greater understanding of and support for the Council's work.

Dialogue and engagement between the Council and the affected countries, as well as the wider United Nations membership, can lead to solutions that are more sustainable. Of particular importance is the need to consult the affected countries, the affected regions and the relevant regional organizations, especially if there are important draft resolutions on the table. For issues affecting Africa, for example, Africa should be consulted, beginning with the members of the Council from Africa. Why is that? It is because Africa knows best. The same goes for other regions. For issues affecting Latin America, Latin America knows best. Therefore, the Council should talk to representatives of the relevant regions and listen to their voices. We also look forward to enhanced consultations with troop-contributing countries, especially with regard to mandate renewals or modifications.

Thirdly, it is important for the Security Council to enhance coordination, cooperation and interaction with other United Nations bodies — whether the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the Peacebuilding Commission — to ensure that peace is built upon human security and anchored on sustainable development. The multidimensional and interrelated nature of the issues affecting humankind — from peace and security to human security, from developmental challenges to climate crises — require more, not less,

interaction between United Nations bodies and entities. We need synergies, not silos; complementarities, not competition. Indeed, how the United Nations architecture better integrates its activities should be one of the important questions addressed at the Summit of the Future.

Finally, we all recognize that improvement in the working methods is only one aspect of Security Council reform. Other aspects, including the question of expansion, will need to be taken up as well, and that will be pursued in the appropriate forums.

Let us also not forget that, for the United Nations and the wider multilateral system to be more prepared to meet the challenges of tomorrow and of today, there are other entities within the United Nations and the multilateral system that need to be reformed as well. For if all those various entities can fully implement their mandates, then it is a plus for international peace, security and stability. And is that not good for the Security Council?

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Kridelka (Belgium): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Benelux countries — Luxembourg, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and my own country, Belgium.

We thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, and we commend the efforts of Japan as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We also sincerely thank Ms. Landgren for her briefing and for her wise recommendations.

Allow me to quote Article 39 of the Charter of the United Nations,

“The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken ... to maintain or restore international peace and security.”

Recently, the Council has not been able to do so and has been unable to fully implement its mandate. That inability to uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations is notably due to the use of the veto, and we deplore that impasse.

The lack of respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law has devastating consequences for civilians in many regions of the world, including in the occupied Palestinian territories, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Afghanistan and, unfortunately, many other places.

Allow me, before finishing, to focus on three points.

Let me start with a very tangible problem. In the past years, vetoes have prevented the Security Council from effectively fulfilling its primary responsibility. The Benelux countries firmly believe that special consideration should be given to ways to limit the use of the veto. As a general principle, we strongly support the political declaration on the suspension of veto powers in cases of mass atrocities, which was presented by France and Mexico, as well as the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, developed by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. In the same vein, we believe that all members of the Security Council must adhere to Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, which stipulates that a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.

Secondly, regarding the Council-approved missions and operations, we welcome and encourage extensive dialogue between the penholders and the host Governments. Within that continuous dialogue, an annual in-country visit by the penholders to engage the host Government on their expectations ahead of negotiations on mandates or sanctions is a matter of basic respect. Systematic coordination and regular exchange with regional organizations, concerned countries, civil society and relevant entities, especially the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as field visits by the Security Council and the Sanctions Committees, will not only benefit the work of the Council, but also increase support for the decisions eventually taken. The Council stands to gain from exchanging not just with the national and local authorities, but also with the staff and specialists of the mission, the local population, including vulnerable and underrepresented groups and civil society representatives. The visits should also take stock of the progress in transition planning and handover to the host State and to the United Nations country team.

Thirdly and lastly, sanctions are an important and legitimate preventive tool of the Security Council under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Council must apply fair and clear procedures in its sanction regimes. The Benelux countries emphasize the need to respect international due process standards in that framework. One consideration is to continuously strengthen due process and to ensure that fair and clear procedures exist for delisting individuals and entities.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the Benelux countries recognize the investment and strong leadership of your country, Japan. We are confident that, under your stewardship, together with your fellow Council members, you will be successful in adopting a new version presidential note 507 before the end of 2024.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Vidal Mercado (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile thanks Japan for convening this open debate. We take note of the briefings and various contributions made and wish you, Mr. President, every success during your presidency of this organ this month.

Chile aligns itself with the statement delivered today by the representative of Norway on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and the statement to be delivered by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions.

In that connection, we would like to reiterate the importance of promoting transparency in the decision-making processes of the Security Council, as well as accountability for them. It is essential to achieve a balance between public and closed meetings, and to encourage greater interactivity in debates and consensus-building.

Like many Member States, we consider the note by the President contained in document S/2017/507 to be a living document that requires constant review. For that reason, we appreciate that the Security Council managed to reach consensus last year on three issues concerning its working methods, as that reflects the Council's good functioning. At the same time, those notes that no longer align with the current reality must be reviewed, updated and streamlined.

We would like to underline the guarantee of equal opportunities that must exist for all elected members of

the Security Council interested in being penholders and co-penholders, in line with the objective of guaranteeing inclusive, fair and timely drafting processes.

We believe that it is imperative to make progress in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council towards greater inclusiveness in its decision-making, for the validity, transparency and effectiveness of the universal multilateral system. Such progress could enhance the legitimacy of the Council and, indeed, enhance confidence in it, even more so now that it is weakened and under siege. We call for increased cooperation and interaction with the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies, in particular the Peacebuilding Commission. We also highlight the participation of civil society representatives in Security Council briefings, as they provide us with more context from their experiences on the ground, and we encourage efforts aimed at more women taking the floor.

In the same vein, in the analysis of peace missions, it is increasingly important to pay attention to troop- and police-contributing countries, using and expanding existing procedures and eventually creating ad hoc procedures for the different missions in order to ensure that the Council fully considers the views and concerns of those countries, taking into account their experiences in the field.

For Chile, defending and strengthening multilateralism will continue to be a priority, in which the reform of the Council — including in the opportunity provided by the Summit of the Future process — is fundamental to legitimizing not only decisions on international peace and security, but also the capacity of the United Nations to arrive on the ground in a timely manner and carry out its main task, namely, the effective protection of civilians, who are disproportionately impacted by conflicts and new threats.

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until Thursday, 14 March, in the afternoon.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.