



Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

Provisional

9410th meeting

Tuesday, 5 September 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Hoxha (Albania)

Members:

Brazil	Mr. Noronha Ribeiro Siscar
China	Mr. Long Qi
Ecuador	Mr. Escobar Ullauri
France	Mr. Olmedo
Gabon	Ms. Bouanga Ayouné
Ghana	Mr. Boateng
Japan	Mr. Sorimachi
Malta	Ms. Siman
Mozambique	Mr. Irachande Gouveia
Russian Federation	Mr. Shulgin
Switzerland	Mrs. Chanda
United Arab Emirates	Mr. Alolama
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Ms. Phipps
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 28 August 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2023/630)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

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

I now give the floor to the representative of Romania.

Mr. Feruță (Romania): I also wish you the best of luck, Mr. President, in presiding over the Security Council during a very hectic month, probably the busiest time for multilateral diplomacy.

The transparency of the work of the Council is a permanent and, I would say, a very articulated expectation from the members of this organ. We commend Albania, as well as the past Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions for constantly striving to improve the efficiency and transparency of the work. We are all interested in a more accountable, transparent, efficient, legitimate and agile Security Council.

In a world of geopolitical fragmentation, procedures and working methods bring a sense of unity and a starting point for tackling security challenges. In practice, the presidency of the Council has exercised a distinct role in deciding who has a voice in the Security Council. Acting with transparency and inclusivity and ensuring the presence of a wide range of voices in the Security Council meetings is key. Both rule 37 and rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure ensure such participation by decision of the Security Council. It is in the interest of Security Council members to allow parties of interest to present their points of view, especially those parties that are impacted by unfolding events. That applies for representatives of civil society, international organizations and Member States. Romania sees room for improvement in that respect.

Arria Formula meetings have been an opportunity to exchange views on topics of interest for the Security Council that are not usually agenda items. We are appreciative of the opportunity to engage in the open Arria Formula meetings, and we wish to see topics of wide interest to the international community being showcased much more. I can think of very good examples of that over the past couple of years on topics such as sea level rise and the relationship between the Security Council and the International Criminal Court.

There is a growing practice of limiting the number of interventions due to time constraints through a cut-off of the list of speakers, which risks affecting inclusivity and equality of opportunity. However, we note as a positive element, the circulation of the compilation of written statements in the aftermath of an Arria Formula meeting.

The working methods represent a crucial tool to ensure that we do not drop an inch in our defence of the Charter of the United Nations — the democratic values and principles of multilateralism. The Security Council needs to use them wisely and to the benefit of the entire United Nations membership, on whose behalf it acts.

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

Ms. Jimenez de la Hoz (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the assumption of your monthly duties as this month's President of the Council and to wish you every success in the performance of those duties. I also thank you for convening this annual debate, which is very important for my delegation and to which we would like to contribute a series of reflections.

Since 1955, when Spain joined the United Nations, we have participated five times as elected members of the Council. The reflections that I will now share are also based on the experience we accumulated then.

We support the statement delivered on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council, because we believe that they are the real driving force for change in the Council, as far as this important issue is concerned.

We believe that in order to improve the functioning of the Security Council — to make it more representative, democratic and effective — we need dialogue, negotiation and open debates, such as this one, which allow us all to share ideas and reflections.

I will simply point out three ideas that I would like to see incorporated into today's proposals.

The first relates to the importance of the Council functioning in the clearest and most transparent way possible. We believe that the application of note S/2017/507 should be more transparent. We also think it is important to improve the Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly by incorporating greater analysis that identifies the challenges of the Council. Why have some decisions not been taken? What obstacles have been encountered? We believe

that this would contribute to a smoother relationship between the Council and the Assembly. In fact, at the General Assembly plenary meeting held on Friday (see A/77/PV.99), the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly (A/77/942) was presented and adopted. That report highlighted the need for increased cooperation between the two organs.

Secondly, we believe that the Council has the potential to function internally in a more balanced way. In our opinion, there is room for improvement in terms of a more equitable division of work, especially with respect to the distribution of the drafting of draft resolutions.

Thirdly, I would like to refer briefly to the issue of the veto. In that regard, we call on all Member States to join both the French-Mexican initiative, which advocates refraining from the use of the veto in the case of mass atrocities such as genocides, crimes against humanity and large-scale war crimes, and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct. Both initiatives seek to ensure that the veto is exercised responsibly and without obstructing the Council's decisions on the gravest cases of atrocity crimes.

In addition, we believe that we should continue along the path initiated in April of 2022 by the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 76/262, aimed at strengthening accountability when the veto is used for political purposes. In that context, we strongly support ensuring the application of Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, which applies to all members of the Security Council.

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

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): Poland would like to thank Albania for convening today's open debate and for diligently chairing the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which is of particular importance when it comes to improving the Security Council's practices and working methods. I also want to wish Albania every success in presiding over the Council in the month of September.

We need the Security Council to function as effectively as possible, which seems especially challenging in the face of the persistent and blatant violations of international law by Russia, one of its permanent members, as evidenced in its ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Nevertheless, we believe

that the goal of enhancing the Council's working methods remains a way to ensure that it can fulfil its primary mandate to maintain international peace and security more effectively. The implementation of note by the President S/2017/507 marks a positive step in that direction. The past 18 months of the Council's proceedings have highlighted three critical aspects that should guide our discussions on the improvement of its methods.

First, it is essential to ensure that non-members of the Council have a meaningful avenue for influencing the discussions on subjects that directly concern them. Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure provide the foundations for that participation, and any endeavours to stifle the diversity of the debates must be prevented. States concerned in the Council's deliberations must be given the opportunity to voice their positions. During the intergovernmental negotiations on reform of the Security Council, a broad consensus emerged that the Council's composition does not adequately reflect the contemporary global landscape. Given that widely shared view, we should make sure that Member States have the right to participate in the Council's discussions. The active involvement of non-members not only reinforces the Council's legitimacy but also safeguards the fundamental principles of multilateralism. On the topic of participation, we advocate for all Council members, including the elected members, to have the capacity to contribute to the drafting process. We therefore call for making further adjustments to promote a more equitable distribution of penholder responsibilities and for strengthening the position of the 10 elected members.

Secondly, broad topics such as the targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure, the situation of children in armed conflict, food security, nuclear safety, cybersecurity, risks related to the development of artificial intelligence, the women and peace and security agenda, environmental damage and human-made disasters all belong in the Security Council Chamber. They are integral to international peace and security and require the Council's unwavering attention. The nature of threats to peace and modern conflicts is complex. To address those challenges effectively, the Council must adopt a comprehensive and open-minded approach. It needs to adapt to the evolving nature of the global security landscape. It must not remain ensnared in the past that its current composition so clearly reflects. We therefore applaud the inclusion of far-reaching and

comprehensive subjects on the Council's agenda. That approach is especially timely because it addresses the fallout that we are seeing from every current conflict, including the fatal consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Finally, Poland has consistently supported the veto initiative created by General Assembly resolution 76/262, which gave all Member States a platform to opine on the use of the veto in the Security Council. The full implementation of that initiative and enhanced cooperation between the two organs represents much-needed progress that will lead to an improvement in the Council's work. In that context, we believe that regular consultations between the Presidents of the Assembly and the Council would be of additional value. We firmly believe that a close link between the two organs should be fostered to enhance the overall effectiveness of the United Nations system.

A more efficient, transparent, representative and accountable Security Council has been a subject of our discussions for years. While comprehensive reform remains an ongoing challenge, we can make significant headway by refining the Council's working methods. Despite all the limitations, we want the Council to function as effectively as possible. Poland remains an unwavering advocate of all efforts leading to that goal.

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

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and your country, Albania, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council, and to thank you for convening this important debate. The Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions has made significant contributions to improving its working methods, especially as reflected in note by the President S/2017/507.

Pakistan's position on the Council's working methods is based on its desire for democracy, accountability, transparency and effectiveness in the Council's work. We support openness and transparency in the work of the Council, including adherence to rule 48 of its rules of procedure, which advocates public meetings of the Council, with closed meetings as the exception. If closed meetings are held, interested non-members of the Council should be invited. In addition, the summary records of closed meetings could be circulated to all Member States, confidentially

if necessary. The Council should adopt guidelines to facilitate the participation of non-members in its deliberations under Articles 37 and 39 of the Charter of the United Nations. Those guidelines should also cover the participation of international organizations, civil society and individuals. The consideration of any items that are on the agenda of the Security Council should not require the support of a majority of Council members but should be considered automatically at the request of any interested State or the Secretary-General.

The Security Council must also respect the General Assembly's role as the principal deliberative policymaking and norm-setting organ of the United Nations. The Council is obliged to provide full and timely reports on its work to the Assembly under Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. Such reporting should provide clear insight into the work of the Council and thereby enable the Assembly to ensure that the Council is indeed acting on behalf of the entire United Nations membership.

Under Article 25 of the Charter, all Member States are obliged to implement the decisions of the Security Council. Pakistan suggests that the Council establish a standing committee on the implementation of its own resolutions. That committee's report should then be an integral part of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. It is disingenuous of those who refuse to implement the Council's resolutions to then argue that obsolete items should be removed from its agenda. Security Council resolutions do not have an expiry date. They must be implemented.

There is considerable dissatisfaction with the Council's sanctions regimes. The Council, or, failing that, the General Assembly, should commission an independent expert study to review the impact, effectiveness and relevance of the Council's various sanctions regimes. We should also prevent the mainstreaming of standards and norms developed in a number of opaque and non-inclusive and unofficial forums and processes through the Council's Chapter VII resolutions. The Council's counter-terrorism architecture is partial, unequal and inadequate. All four pillars of the United Nations counter-terrorism strategy should be implemented comprehensively and equitably. Since the Council appears unable to do that, Pakistan has proposed that the General Assembly establish a committee to secure the comprehensive implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

The improvement of its working methods is an integral part of Security Council reform — one of the five clusters on Council reform being considered in the intergovernmental negotiations process. In order to serve its misplaced ambition, one State appears willing to destroy that process, which was established with the consensus support of the entire United Nations membership. That will prove counterproductive.

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

Mr. Muhith (Bangladesh): Bangladesh welcomes the Albanian presidency of the Security Council for the month of September and expresses its appreciation to Albania for convening today's open debate. The Informal Working Group on Documentation and Procedural Questions has identified a number of gaps in the implementation of note by the President S/2017/507, focusing on improving the quality of open debates, boosting the participation of women from civil society and enhancing the Council's cooperation with other United Nations principal organs. We all agree that the Council's membership and structure, as well as its working methods, are not in tune with the current realities on the ground. In order to effectively address the evolving security challenges, it will be crucial to ensure that the Council adopts fair, transparent, efficient and effective working methods. I would like to share a few points in that regard.

First, the Council should strengthen its engagement with the wider United Nations membership. To achieve that, permanent mechanisms should facilitate consultations and the exchange of information. While we appreciate open debates, we need to enhance their efficiency and explore innovative ways to involve the broader United Nations membership effectively. That strategic approach will not only prevent redundancy but will also ensure that the Council operates within its designated mandate without infringing on the General Assembly's jurisdiction. In addition, the Council needs to expand its outreach to the countries affected when a situation is discussed in a private or closed setting.

Secondly, if we are to make the Council proactive, improving coordination and cooperation among the principal organs of the United Nations is crucial. For example, the Council's engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission could be further strengthened by leveraging the unique advisory role of the Commission. To that end, the Council can continue seeking specific, strategic and targeted advice, in

accordance with resolutions 1645 (2005), 2282 (2016) and 2558 (2020). To further enhance the synergy, a follow-up mechanism can be established so as to systematize the two-way communications between the Security Council and the Commission. We also want to emphasize the importance of substantive consultations with top troop- and police-contributing countries throughout all stages of peacekeeping missions, including the transition.

Thirdly, a comprehensive reform of the use of the veto is required, taking into account current geopolitical realities. As long as it continues to exist, we believe that necessary measures should be taken to ensure its judicious application, including by limiting its use only in certain compelling situations. We support General Assembly resolution 76/262, as it allows Member States to express their views on the Council's actions.

Fourthly, we underscore the importance of ensuring accountability and transparency in the work of the Sanctions Committees. The Council must assess the effectiveness of sanctions and ensure that they do not have adverse humanitarian consequences for civilian populations or for humanitarian activities carried out by humanitarian organizations.

Finally, in order to promote transparency, accountability, inclusivity and effectiveness, the Council's workload must be shared more evenly among all its members. That applies to penholderships, co-penholderships and the selection and chairing of subsidiary bodies. Let us work together for a more effective, transparent, inclusive, representative Council for 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 on the working methods of the Security Council. We commend Albania and you in particular, Mr. President, for your excellent work and for Albania's consistent leadership as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Let me also say at the outset that we welcomed the statement on working methods made on behalf of the 10 elected members of the Security Council (E10) by the representative of Ecuador earlier today. We are pleased that the elected members are united and share a common approach to improving the Council's working methods.

We fully endorse the E10 statement and in particular share the view that note by the President S/2017/507 is a living document and not only requires consistent implementation but also continued review. As a small State, Singapore has always placed great importance on improving the working methods of the Council as a means to enhance the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of the Council's work. And it is an equally important fact that the working methods of the Council are related to its credibility, legitimacy and relevance.

The Council's working methods must always ensure that its work remains transparent and accessible to the wider membership. It is therefore important that the wider United Nations membership be informed of the Council's work. It is also important for the wider United Nations membership to be able to engage and participate in the work of the Council on matters of great importance to them. In that regard, we should not forget that the Council acts on behalf of the wider United Nations membership. I would now like to make a few points.

First, we need more open discussions. We understand that not everything can or should be discussed in public all the time, and that closed consultations may be necessary for candid and frank exchanges. But a balance needs to be struck in a way that encourages more open discussions, not fewer.

Secondly, it is important to ensure that information and documentation flow regularly to the wider United Nations membership. My delegation has previously suggested that some form of summary records — or at least decision points — should be maintained for closed meetings and shared with the wider membership whenever it is possible to do so.

Thirdly, it is important for every President of the Council to prepare sufficiently detailed monthly assessment reports and to submit them in a timely manner. The monthly assessment reports are an important tool of communication and information flow from the Council to the wider United Nations membership.

Another important consideration is accountability. General Assembly resolution 76/262, on the veto, initiated by Liechtenstein, is an example of the Assembly's expectation of greater transparency and accountability from the Council and from the permanent members concerned. Pursuant to paragraph 129 of presidential note 507, Singapore has also suggested previously that an interactive informal exchange

between the Council and the wider membership should take place when the introduction to the annual report is being drafted. It is our hope that Council members will implement that idea as soon as possible.

The last point I want to make is on effectiveness. Let me add that even as we strive to improve Security Council working methods, even the best adherence to process will not be enough to ensure that the Council operates effectively. In other words, good working methods are necessary, but they are not sufficient to ensure good outcomes from the Council. Ultimately, the wider United Nations membership expects the members of the Council, especially the permanent members, to act with unity of purpose in discharging their primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The reality is that the Council is inevitably hampered by geopolitical tensions and great-Power rivalry. From time to time the Council has been able to demonstrate its effectiveness by addressing some of the major issues of our time. In our view, for example, the Council's adoption of resolution 2664 (2022) to create humanitarian carveouts for sanctions was a significant achievement. However, we have also seen more frequent use of the veto in recent years and months. It was used four times last year on issues of great concern to the wider United Nations membership, such as non-proliferation, the Syria border-crossing and, of course, the issue of Ukraine. Most recently, the veto was used twice within two months to terminate the Syria border-crossing mandate and the sanctions regime and mandate of the Panel of Experts on Mali established pursuant to resolution 2374 (2017).

Singapore supports the French-Mexican initiative and the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group on limiting the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocity crimes. We also echo the statement made on behalf of the E10 earlier today, in which the elected members called for restraint in other forms of the use of the veto in the subsidiary bodies of the Council. In addition, we believe it is important for all Council members, including permanent members, to abstain from voting if they are party to a dispute, in accordance with Article 27, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations.

I would like to conclude with an expression of hope that even in these challenging times, the Council and its members, both permanent and elected, will be able to engage constructively to improve the working

methods of the Council. As was expressed in the E10 statement this morning, improving its working methods is a prerequisite for a more effective Council, and a more effective Council will in turn contribute to its own credibility and legitimacy and the relevance of the United Nations in resolving the major issues of our time.

I wish Albania's presidency every success.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Kadiri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to thank your friendly country, Albania, which is presiding over the Security Council this month, for convening this open debate on the Council's working methods. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to highly commend the outstanding work done by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions under your leadership and chairmanship, Mr. President.

In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, it is important that the Security Council continues to adapt its working methods as it implements its mandate as guarantor of the maintenance of international peace and security on behalf of all States Members of the United Nations. In that regard, we welcome the important improvements that the Security Council has agreed on to strengthen its working methods since the adoption of note by the President S/2017/507 and the presidential notes that have complemented it subsequently. The Council's ability to adapt its working methods to global circumstances was clearly shown when it succeeded in continuing to deliver on its peacekeeping mandate on the international stage during the coronavirus disease pandemic. Video-teleconference meetings and other innovative working methods enabled Council members not only to consider the items on its agenda but to adopt decisions and resolutions renewing international peace and security mandates.

We also want to underscore the efforts made by Council members to strengthen the transparency and inclusivity of its work. In that regard, we were pleased that all the Security Council presidencies convened meetings with all the States Members of the United Nations both to present the programme of work at the beginning of the month and to discuss the Council's work at the end of the month in the framework of the wrap-up sessions. Morocco has gladly participated systematically in all of those meetings, in which it has been able to interact with the presidencies. We have also

noted the increase in the number of public meetings and briefings when that has been possible. At the same time, we acknowledge that consultations of the whole are of critical importance, whether to discuss sensitive issues or to reach compromises on difficult issues.

As a country that has consistently contributed troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations since the 1960s, the Kingdom of Morocco has seen first-hand the positive impact of the work of the Security Council on maintaining, building and sustaining peace. In that regard, we would like to stress the importance of holding consultations between Council members and the representatives of troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as triangular meetings that also include representatives of the Secretariat. United Nations peacebuilding efforts are a top priority for Morocco, and we therefore support the Secretary-General in according critical importance to peacebuilding in *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) and in his New Agenda for Peace. In that context, we welcome the growing cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and its various country configurations. We call for continuing to strengthen the cooperation between the PBC, its country configurations and the Council through the regular participation of the PBC Chairs and the representatives of its country configurations in Council meetings and by taking account of their recommendations and advice in forging Council decisions.

Needless to say, improving the working methods of the Security Council through the combined and inclusive efforts of all Member States, and by ensuring that Council members show strong political will in that regard, is an important step towards strengthening the mandate of the principal organ responsible for maintenance of international peace and security. We should emphasize that debates such as the one we are having today on improving the Council's working methods are part and parcel of the overall vision of the new United Nations architecture, in line with the aspirations of the Secretary-General and his proposed reforms aimed at strengthening the efficiency and coherence of the United Nations as a whole in order to better respond to our current global challenges. That will be at the heart of discussions at the Summit of the Future, to be held next year. As an active member of our Organization, Morocco stands determined to contribute constructively to such debates and to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the working methods and work of the Security Council.

Lastly, we would be remiss if we did not pay tribute to the Security Council Affairs Division, which is making its own contribution to improving the Council's working methods through its reports, analyses and interaction with Member States.

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

Mr. Papakostas (Greece): Let me begin by commending you, Sir, for organizing this annual open debate on the Security Council's working methods, as well for your work as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions. The debate offers an excellent opportunity to evaluate the state of the Council's work and to exchange ideas and proposals on the improvement of its working methods, with the ultimate objective of enhancing its efficiency, transparency, effectiveness and accountability. In that regard, we fully support that the revised note by the President S/2017/507, which consolidated, streamlined and restructured its predecessor (S/2010/507) and all additional stand-alone presidential notes, should be the basis of our discussions and guide us in our efforts. We also encourage all the members of the Council to continue working to fully implement all of its elements, including the monthly programme of work, the monthly forecast, meetings, informal consultations of the whole, the drafting of outcome documents, dialogue with non-Council members and bodies and Security Council missions.

I would also like to commend Japan for its invaluable work in preparing and updating the Interactive Handbook of the Working Methods of the Security Council, dating back to 2006, as well as for its recent digitalization. The launch event on 30 June for the Interactive Handbook, organized by the Permanent Missions of Japan, Kuwait, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Albania and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in which we participated, offered the broader United Nations membership a good opportunity to become familiar with the Handbook's content and use. At this point I would like to present seven ideas for improving the working methods of the Council.

First, we share the view of many Member States that the Council should officially adopt its provisional 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. In that regard, the Council should consider inviting the Chair of the Commission regularly in order to brief its members on issues relevant to peacebuilding.

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

Fourthly, my country supported General Assembly resolution 76/262, which launched the so-called veto initiative, in the firm belief that it represents an invaluable contribution to enhancing the Council's accountability. In that spirit, we share the view that the reports of the President of the Council to the President of General Assembly related to that resolution should be more detailed and in-depth in order to provide the broader membership with the background and possible rationales behind the casting of a veto.

We stress the importance of the Council going back to conducting missions to the field more often. We also believe that closer consultation by the Council with the Member States that are directly affected by resolutions is very 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.

I would like to conclude by stressing that Greece, as a candidate for membership of the Security Council for the 2025–2026 term, will continue to closely follow the discussions on the improvement of the working methods of the Council and will consistently work for that goal if elected.

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

Mr. Larsen (Australia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important open debate on Security Council working methods. I commend your leadership and acknowledge the work of past Chairs of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions on promoting meaningful reform of the Council. Australia would like to highlight three key areas of working-methods reform — transparency, the use of the veto and strengthening the peacebuilding architecture.

A transparent Security Council is in the interests of all Member States. As Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations makes clear, the Council acts on

behalf of all Member States to maintain international peace and security. Australia welcomes the note by the President S/2017/507, which sets out the commitment and updates to the key document on working methods. We want to see strengthened engagement between Council members and the broader United Nations membership, including with key regional groupings, in order to inform Council discussions on the significant challenges facing us all.

Greater transparency and consultation with non-members of the Council will continue to enhance the Council's credibility. Australia supports expanding the use of public meetings, open debates, Arria Formula meetings and monthly preview and wrap-up sessions. As we all know, effective multilateralism is not just about the discussions inside this Chamber — it is also about being inclusive. Australia continues to support participation in Council meetings by those working in the field, often at great risk to their own personal safety, whether they are civil-society representatives or humanitarian briefers. Their valuable experiences strengthen the Council's decision-making. Noting their vulnerability, Australia supports initiatives to ensure their protection, such as the one led by Switzerland.

Regarding the use of the veto, working methods must be effective to allow the Council to discharge its mandate. The veto is a powerful instrument, and its use must be transparent and restrained. Australia supports all efforts in that regard. We urge all Member States to capitalize on the momentum of the Liechtenstein initiative embodied in General Assembly resolution 76/262 and support further practical proposals for greater accountability and transparency.

In terms of strengthening the peacebuilding architecture, we know that the world is sadly facing an extraordinary rise in instability and armed conflict. Last year was the deadliest for armed conflict since the 1994 Rwandan genocide. For peace to be sustainable, peacebuilding must be the responsibility of the entire United Nations system. It cannot simply be confined to United Nations peacebuilding institutions. Working methods should support the Peacebuilding Commission's unique role, especially as an adviser to the Security Council. We support efforts to strengthen the role of the Peacebuilding Commission. It can bring early attention to situations of risk and support coherent, whole-of-system action on conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts.

In conclusion, we must redouble our efforts to improve the Security Council's working methods and achieve consensus. Australia will continue to engage constructively in the intergovernmental processes. We will work with all Member States to deliver on the ambitious scope of the Secretary-General's Pact for the Future and a Security Council that can effectively address our shared challenges.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Dandy (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Charter of the United Nations clearly established a division of duties and specific criteria governing the work of its main organs, particularly the Security Council. Despite that, and despite the repeated requests from Member States over the years asking for efficiency and transparency in the work of the Council and improvements in its working methods, the facts show that some Council members are still not taking on their mandated responsibilities and are exploiting the Council's working methods selectively and manipulatively in order to cater to their own whims or interests. For that reason, my delegation would like to make the following remarks.

First, there must be an end to the extreme political polarization within the Security Council, which has led certain Council members to underestimate the importance and urgency of certain issues requiring the Council's consideration, tending to manipulate the Council's priorities and divert its work from its main objective.

Secondly, the Council should promote interaction and constructive dialogue with non-member States, especially when it is considering issues that concern them. In addition, the Council should not disregard serious concerns voiced by those States, particularly when it is drafting resolutions concerning them.

Thirdly, the Council should review its distribution of responsibilities among its penholders, which should alternate between members and should ensure that the Council can benefit from the experience and skills of its elected members.

Fourthly, the Council's use of its resources and time should be streamlined by limiting the frequency of recurring meetings held on issues concerning specific countries.

Fifthly, sanctions imposed by the Security Council should be periodically reviewed with a view to preventing their adverse impact on the peoples of the countries they target, particularly with regard to their right to life, food, medical care, development and other human rights.

Sixthly, promoting transparency in the work of the Security Council demands participation in its meetings by representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations, which adds value for the Council through the benefit derived from their experience. However, we have unfortunately witnessed the exploitation of the invitations to those individuals that contributed to the dissemination of unfounded allegations in order to advance the nefarious political agendas of certain Member States. Invitations were extended to individuals who were associated with those States, helped to achieve their objectives and contributed to the dissemination of lies and disinformation. That improper practice undermines the participation of civil society representatives in the Council's meetings, gives the wrong impression about its discussions and diverts them away from their true objective, which runs counter to the responsibilities of Council members. In that context, we call for the adoption of a binding code of conduct related to the participation of civil society representatives and non-governmental organizations in open meetings of the Council. That participation is a privilege which should be accompanied by responsibility.

In conclusion, I would like to note that open debates should not be a mere talk show. We need to discuss tangible ideas and reach conclusions that could be implemented in order to have a positive impact on the Security Council's working methods and its effectiveness and efficiency in shouldering its responsibilities.

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

Ms. Zamora Zumbado (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Albania, in its capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, for organizing this timely debate. We wish it success in presiding over the Security Council during this month of September. Costa Rica also associates itself with the statements delivered by Norway on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group

and by Ireland on behalf of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions.

There is an undeniable connection between conflict prevention and the working methods of the Security Council. By focusing solely on responding to crises rather than proactively preventing them, the Security Council will find itself perpetually unable to intervene proactively to prevent the loss of countless lives. As a result, millions of people will continue to suffer from violent conflict, and the Council will remain unable to offer effective solutions. In other words, weaknesses in its working methods have a very high human cost.

Allow me to underscore three aspects in that regard.

First, Costa Rica reiterates the importance of open debates since they allow the Council to listen to the entire membership at the highest level. They have become a regular feature of the Council's monthly programme of work. However, as a State's place on the list of speakers drops, so does the level of representation of those seated at this table. For that reason, Costa Rica calls on the presidency of the Council to prepare a working document that addresses the recommendations of the membership and moves forward on the issue of the provisional nature of its rules of procedure. That will promote greater stability, transparency and legal certainty and will also strengthen the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Secondly, Costa Rica underscores the importance of maintaining a balanced distribution of penholders on the Council's agenda items, which promotes cooperation and collective responsibility among the permanent and elected members. However, joint drafting or co-authorship should be established as a rule for initiating and leading the drafting process. That practice will promote greater participation of all Council members in decision-making, in particular those countries from the region in question, those willing to increase their level of participation or those with a special interest in it, for example, the Chairs of Sanctions Committees or subsidiary bodies directly related to a given situation.

Thirdly, Costa Rica calls for more regular interaction between the subsidiary bodies and the Member States, as well as with other actors, such as United Nations agencies and regional and subregional organizations. It is also important for Costa Rica to continue to consider the criteria for the selection of experts of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council,

in accordance with the note by the President contained in document S/2006/997.

Working methods are the sinews and the vessels that connect the Council with other vital organs, helping them to function with greater synergy, but also with greater confidence. Working methods can mean the difference between lamenting a child's illness and bringing the child to the doctor, between preventing conflict and deploring genocide, between claiming an institutional mandate and fulfilling it. We cannot afford to lack the proper sense of responsibility and political will to ensure the effectiveness of the Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Irvani (Islamic Republic of Iran): I congratulate Albania on its assumption of the presidency for this month and thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate.

Improving the Security Council's efficiency and effectiveness should be a continuous endeavour, grounded first and foremost in the commitment of its members since the dynamic and developing nature of global peace and security challenges needs such constant adaptation. In pursuit of those goals, the most effective approach is to initiate a comprehensive reform that will transform the Security Council into an entirely transparent, rules-based and, most important, accountable body that upholds the rule of law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations while serving the common interests of the entire membership.

Similarly, the Security Council's improper and unlawful practices, as well as the application of double standards, which is detrimental to international peace and security, must be prioritized in such reform. That highlights the significance of the Council's working methods as one of the five major topics now being discussed in the ongoing Security Council reform debates in the format of intergovernmental negotiations.

Against that backdrop and in alignment with the agenda for today's open debate, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, in all decisions the Security Council must adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, ensuring that its actions are consistent with its Charter-based mandate while

preventing interference in the internal affairs of Member States.

Secondly, any attempt to abuse the Security Council's rules of procedure, established practices or working methods for political purposes undermines the Council's credibility and legitimacy, as well as its ability to uphold the Charter of the United Nations. Unfortunately, such wrongful endeavours are becoming more common, and certain Member States have cynically abused the Council's presidency to advance their narrow national interests, as was the case with the recent semi-annual briefing on resolution 2231 (2015) held on 6 July (see S/PV.9367), when the Council's presidency extended an invitation to a Member State with no relevance to the meeting's agenda item, a practice that is both irresponsible and a clear abuse of processes and positions. Such irresponsible actions must be stopped.

Thirdly, the issue of the penholder system is an ongoing concern, as it has been exploited to promote the interests of specific members. Currently, the three permanent members with a colonial mentality maintain control over most country-specific matters on the Council's agenda, often disregarding the views and legitimate concerns of countries on the agenda and even subjecting them to undue pressure. That approach results in rushed decisions without comprehensive expert review and the ignoring of the views of other Council members, which leads to non-consensual documents. It is imperative that both penholders and co-penholders carry out their duties responsibly and impartially.

Fourthly, finally, regarding sanctions, we believe that those measures must undergo rigorous and ongoing assessments of their profound humanitarian consequences, with a commitment to suspend or terminate them when deemed essential. When deliberating the imposition of sanctions, particularly in scenarios where their necessity or justification is questionable, the Security Council should exercise its Chapter VII powers with deliberate care, wisdom and profound consideration of the significant humanitarian and human rights repercussions on civilian populations.

Furthermore, the penholders must refrain from using sanctions as a cover for illegal unilateral actions or as a weapon against the countries under the agenda to advance their narrow political purposes, all of which would be harmful to civilian populations and the well-being of independent sovereign States. Unilateral

coercive measures have no legal basis and blatantly violate international law and the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Central African Republic.

Mr. Sepe (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): The Central African Republic applauds the Albanian presidency of the Security Council for this month of September. We also welcome once again the initiative of this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council.

The Central African Republic welcomes the progress made on this issue through the adoption of two additional notes and the publication by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions of its first annual report. Those strides forward help to reassure us that our annual meetings on this issue are not simply a type of group therapy serving as an outlet for our pent-up frustrations in the face of the inequity and the ongoing lack of understanding. The Central African Republic nevertheless deplores the inertia on the fundamental and decisive subjects already mentioned last year by several delegations. Those matters have yet to be resolved, which leads to our ongoing concern regarding our objective to make the decisions of the Security Council more effective and efficient.

I want to mention the penholder issue, where we continue to note those negative trends, namely the monopolization of that primary function by one or a very limited number of countries. That often leads to imposed and misunderstood unilateral decisions that are not unanimous, but rather contested, and are the result of inadequate consultations with countries on the Council's agenda, which disregard those countries' main points of view and those of the regional, continental and subregional organizations concerned. The Central African Republic continues to think that all members of the Council should have the same opportunity to fully and usefully participate in elaborating the documents of the Council, including resolutions, presidential statements and press releases, in conformity with note S/2017/507.

On this point, we would like to suggest the idea of introducing a restriction or annual limit per member of the Council on the penholder function, all while reflecting on a mechanism that would share that function. That arrangement, in turn, would strengthen the effectiveness of the Council and ensure that drafting

Council documents is more inclusive and enables the full participation of all members of the Council for effective and valid decision.

In our view, the ongoing pursuit of effectiveness and coherence should guide the actions and decisions of the Council. The independent evaluations are therefore an essential tool to objectively judge the coherence, appropriateness and effectiveness of the agreed objectives. The Central African Republic would like to reiterate here our wish to see those evaluations applied to sanctions regimes and peacekeeping force mandates.

Individual sanctions through the freezing of assets and travel restrictions have been taken against the leaders of armed groups for at least 10 years, yet they have not turned out to have a real impact on crisis resolution. In the context of the Central African Republic, such sanctions are more symbolic than a means of effective action to achieve peace.

Also, for several years the Council maintained a now immoral arms embargo against the Central African Republic, thus limiting and redirecting the capacity of our national defence and security forces while allowing terrorist groups to prosper for a very long time, massacring and attacking civilians at will, with a peacekeeping force that is inoperative and ineffective due to an inappropriate mandate. We therefore believe that evaluations are critical to enable the Council to achieve its primary goal — the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, the Central African Republic remains particularly concerned about the negative impact of certain conflicts with geopolitical impacts on the decisions and the work of the Council. We increasingly observe that certain members of the Council are choosing a mechanical alignment, without real objectivity, on bloc-based positions, which, wrongly or rightly, classifies countries on the agenda as good or bad. Such an approach, together with a lack of understanding sometimes seen of the real situation of countries on the agenda, in addition to reports that can be biased, can only have a negative impact on the resolution of crises.

The Central African Republic believes that field visits are critical to a better understanding among Council members of the various problems countries face and promote — we hope — greater objectivity. We therefore support the initiative to increase such visits. We also would like to reaffirm our attachment to the

reform of the Security Council along the lines of the African Union position—the only way to ensure balance and equity within the Security Council. Inclusivity, coherence, objectivity and equity, in our view, should guide the working methods of the Security Council in order to achieve unanimous and effective decisions.

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

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the permanent delegation of Albania, President of the Security Council for this month and the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, for convening this important meeting to discuss the development of the Council's working methods in future. That would allow the Council to fully carry out the tasks entrusted to it amid various circumstances and emergency situations.

I would also like to thank His Excellency Mr. Ferit Hoxha, Permanent Representative of Albania and Chair of the Informal Working Group, for his valuable comments.

The world today is witnessing emerging and accelerating developments and ongoing conflicts. That requires the Security Council, as the principal organ for maintaining international peace and security, to play a tangible role in all circumstances and at all times. It is extremely important therefore for the international community to intensify its efforts to develop the working methods of the Security Council and to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness to face the various international challenges.

In that context, we commend the efforts of the successive Chairs of the Informal Working Group, leading to the issuance of several important documents on the Council's working methods in order to enhance its effectiveness, transparency and dealing with important issues, most notably revised presidential note S/2006/507. We also commend the efforts of the two previous Chairs of the Informal Working Group, namely, the State of Kuwait and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, leading to the adoption of 13 additional presidential notes that contributed to the development of the Council's working methods.

The Kingdom of Bahrain stresses the need to convene more objective and interactive consultations and to increase the participation of States that are not Council members in the Council's work, in line with Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter. It is also important to ensure the issuance of the Security Council's report in due time to allow the General Assembly to discuss it. There should also be more open meetings, and the documents issued by the Council should be expeditiously uploaded to the Council's website in the six official languages.

The Kingdom of Bahrain also reaffirms the importance of note by the President of the Security Council S/2016/619 which deals with the work of the Chairs of the subsidiary organs. The Chairs of the Council's subsidiary organs, including the Chairs of the Sanctions Committees, should provide informal periodic briefings on their activities to all Member States as appropriate and should publish the dates and venues of those meetings well ahead of time. That is especially important as Member States are expected to implement many of the recommendations of those Committees and to coordinate on the implementation of binding Security Council resolutions.

The Kingdom of Bahrain appreciates the tireless efforts undertaken to coordinate and cooperate among the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other organs. That facilitates the work of the Organization being done in a quick and effective manner and supports the Council in implementing its mandate. We stress the role of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain looks forward to the convening of regular meetings on the development of the Council's working methods. That is an important issue for all Member States that seek to enhance the Council's efficiency and enable it to adapt to continuous developments. Such meetings allow the progress achieved in that regard to be reviewed and the various opinions on how to address those developments to be heard.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.