



Security Council

Distr.: General
1 March 2024

Original: English

Letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of Japan, the Security Council plans to hold an open debate on 11 March 2024 on the theme “Working methods of the Security Council” in connection with the item entitled “Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2017/507)”.

In this regard, Japan has prepared a concept note (see annex). I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Yamazaki Kazuyuki**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 1 March 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the working methods of the Security Council, 11 March 2024

Background

Against the backdrop of a precarious, increasingly divisive global geopolitical landscape with complex challenges around the world, the effective functioning of the Security Council has never been more crucial.

The Security Council must fulfil its paramount responsibility to maintain international peace and security by taking prompt and effective action. At the same time, the Council's decisions will be effectively carried out only when they gain the support of the wider United Nations membership.

In this sense, the Council's endeavour for more transparent, efficient and inclusive working methods is critical in enabling it to better respond to threats posed to international peace and security in a timely and holistic manner.

Upon the Council's request, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions has consistently deliberated on how to improve the Council's working methods, and as outcomes, the Council has repeatedly issued notes by the President of the Security Council ("presidential notes") to respond to procedural necessities.¹ Since the adoption of the presidential note in 2017 (S/2017/507, known as "note 507"), 16 notes² have been adopted.³

The Informal Working Group has also strived to ensure the implementation of the presidential notes, as well as the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. In this context, at the first Informal Working Group meeting, held on 19 January 2024, the Council members shared their understanding of the importance of updating note 507 by incorporating all presidential notes to ensure their implementation, as well as adding provisions responding to contemporary needs. The Council members have already initiated work on this.

Since 2010, the Council has held annual open debates on its working methods, which have served as an opportunity to reflect the views of the wider United Nations membership. The views expressed at these meetings have greatly contributed to the development of the working methods. As the process of updating note 507 has just begun, this open debate is particularly timely as an opportunity for Member States to make their voices heard.

¹ For instance, in 2023, the Informal Working Group adopted notes regarding the practice of penholdership/co-penholdership (S/2023/945), the encouragement of the timely appointment of subsidiary bodies' Chairs/Vice-Chairs (S/2023/615) and the procedure for the observance of minutes of silence (S/2023/612).

² S/2019/990, S/2019/991, S/2019/992, S/2019/993, S/2019/994, S/2019/995, S/2019/996, S/2019/997, S/2021/645, S/2021/646, S/2021/647, S/2021/648, S/2021/1074, S/2023/612, S/2023/615 and S/2023/945.

³ See www.un.org/securitycouncil/content/interactive-handbook. These notes as well as relevant documents on the working methods were made available online through a project supported by Japan (the Vice-Chair of the Informal Working Group in 2023) in June 2023, as part of the Interactive Handbook of the Working Methods of the Security Council.

Guiding questions

For the purpose of a focused discussion, delegations are asked to consider a number of questions, which are not limited to the following:

- How can the working methods overall play a role in the Council's fulfilment of its responsibility for maintaining international peace and security?
- Do you think the existing provisions are being duly implemented? If not, how can we improve them?⁴
- To better address contemporary needs, what specific provision(s) should be introduced?⁵

Briefers and format

- Executive Director of Security Council Report, Karin Landgren
- Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, Yamazaki Kazuyuki

Member States wishing to participate should inscribe their names on the list of speakers through the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE. A letter addressed to the President of the Security Council, duly signed by the Permanent Representative or the Chargé d'affaires a.i., requesting to participate in accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure must be uploaded to the eSpeakers module of e-deleGATE.

Inscription for the list of speakers will open at 9.30 a.m. on 6 March 2024.

All speakers are asked to keep their interventions succinct and within three minutes (four minutes for group statements). The red light on the collar of the microphone will start blinking after two and a half minutes from the beginning of the intervention. The presidency may encourage the speakers to wrap up immediately as necessary after 30 seconds have elapsed beyond the time limit. Given the current administrative constraints of the United Nations, the President might need to wrap up the open debate without finishing the speakers list.

Follow-up

Japan, as Chair of the Informal Working Group, intends to follow up on the discussions at the open debate, especially regarding specific practical suggestions, and due consideration will also be given to the deliberations at the Informal Working Group towards an updated note 507 to be adopted in due course. In addition, Japan, in its capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group, intends to continue the recent practice of producing an analytical summary of the proposals made at the open debate, including those by the briefers.

⁴ Speakers are encouraged, whenever possible, to refer to specific paragraphs in the relevant existing presidential notes.

⁵ Delegations are invited to suggest specific ideas for the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council. A useful summary of the open debate of 2023 is available in [S/2023/921](#) for reference.