



Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7052nd meeting

Tuesday, 29 October 2013, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan)

Members:

Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
Australia	Mr. Quinlan
China	Mr. Wang Min
France	Mr. Araud
Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
Republic of Korea	Mr. Lee Kyung Chul
Russian Federation.	Mr. Churkin
Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
Togo.	Mr. M'Beou
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
United States of America.	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

Implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507)

Security Council Working Methods

Letter dated 16 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2013/613)

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The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Kyslytsya (Ukraine): I would like to thank you, Sir, for holding this important meeting and to congratulate you on Azerbaijan's successful conduct of the presidency of the Security Council.

Ukraine considers the Council's effectiveness and efficiency, coupled with its openness and transparency, as the pillars of the overall activity of this body. Therefore, we broadly share the priorities for today's debate stemming from the concept paper (S/2013/613, annex), namely, strengthening the Council's transparency; enhancing its interaction with non-Council members, other United Nations bodies and regional and subregional organizations; and ensuring increased informative and analytical annual reporting to the General Assembly.

Ukraine welcomes the Council's continuous efforts aimed at streamlining and improving its procedure as showcased by the 2010 presidential note (S/2010/507), which is under discussion today. Among such positive steps during 2013, I would like to point out the increased number of public meetings, the active revisiting of the practice of wrap-up meetings and monthly informal briefings at the end of presidencies and the increased use of video-teleconferencing services.

There remains a number of significant issues to be addressed, among which is the institution of the veto in the Security Council. Ukraine supports the necessity of creating conditions to gradually reduce the use of the veto. In that regard, we took note, with interest, of the relevant proposal of France. In our view, such an initiative, along with other positive developments in the domain of working methods, would demonstrate the potential for ambitious change originating from within the Council, in line with Article 30 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Fully cognizant that the Council is master of its own procedures, Ukraine believes that this body would benefit by taking on board, as it deems necessary, innovative ideas of the wider United Nations membership, as envisaged in Article 10 of the Charter. The same relates to the accommodation of the legitimate concerns of non-members of the Council.

Let me recall the long-standing position of Ukraine on the necessity of providing a stronger voice in Council decision-making processes to the United Nations States Members that are directly involved in implementing its decisions. First and foremost, such measures should apply in cases involving troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries (PCCs).

From our experience of active participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, Ukraine sees a continuous need to adjust the Council's timing of decisions on extending peacekeeping operation mandates, so as to avoid placing the relevant TCCs and PCCs in a difficult position. Taking such decisions whenever feasible and well in advance of the target date would provide TCCs and PCCs with more time to align new or extended Council mandates with national legislation. This especially concerns those countries that, like Ukraine, by law require Parliament's approval for the deployment of their peacekeeping contingents.

Ukraine welcomes the emphasis of the presidency of Azerbaijan on strengthening the partnership synergy between the Council and regional and subregional organizations, as evidenced by yesterday's high-level briefing by the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (see S/PV.7050).

Commitment to a strong, effective, efficient and transparent Security Council was a cornerstone of Ukraine's only tenure in this body as an independent State in 2000 and 2001. It is in keeping with and building on this tradition that we intend to serve on the Council if Ukraine is elected as a non-permanent member for the term 2016-2017.

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

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): Liechtenstein is a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group and aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Switzerland. We would now like to raise a few specific points relating to the Council's work on accountability

and the veto, from the perspective of its working methods.

During the past year, the Council has made some progress in improving its interaction with the International Criminal Court and on related issues. The open debate of October 2012 on peace and justice (see S/PV.6894), with a special focus on the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC), was a good opportunity for the wider membership to express its views on the Council's relations to that key institution of international criminal justice. We also consider the informal, interactive dialogue between the Council and the ICC Prosecutor is also a useful format, allowing for a more fluid exchange of information and a less limited conversation. While we welcome these events and thank the delegations that have initiated them, we are disappointed about the lack of follow-up. As often seems to be the case in the workings of the Council, positive innovations are difficult to institutionalize.

The Council began this year well by expressing its commitment to effectively following up issues of cooperation with international tribunals, including the ICC. Unfortunately, the Council has not lived up to this promise so far. The Council still lacks the proper forum for interaction with the ICC and on related issues. One year ago, together with Costa Rica and Jordan, we encouraged the creation of a new subsidiary body or the re-tasking of the Informal Working Group on Tribunals. Since then, the need for such a platform has only become more pressing as requests to the Council relating to ICC issues are in the headlines on a daily basis. Partially due to this shortcoming, the Council has again failed to take up the Court's decisions of non-cooperation in the Darfur situation. The failure of the Council to effectively follow up its own referrals undermines the credibility of both bodies.

We have seen the recent request by Kenya that the Security Council defer the cases in the Kenya situation for 12 months, pursuant to article 16 of the Rome Statute — an issue that will be taken up by the Council shortly. This should remind us of the need to revisit the Council's working methods in dealing with such requests. The Council's decision-making process on article 16 deferrals should be informed and made on the basis of a thorough discussion involving all stakeholders. The implementation of article 16 of the Rome Statute is as much a concern of all States parties to the Statute as it is of the members of the Council. We therefore encourage the Security Council to enter into a

dialogue with States parties, especially on the question of criteria to be considered in deciding whether to defer cases before the ICC.

The situation in Syria, now in its third year, has laid bare the Council's shortcomings. The Council has been unable to play its role on nearly all issues, save that of chemical weapons. While we appreciate the efforts of Luxembourg and Australia in drafting the recent presidential statement on the humanitarian situation in Syria (S/PRST/2013/15), we regret that the Council was not able to adopt a resolution on this topic.

The Council has also failed in its responsibility to promote accountability for the war crimes and crimes against humanity that have been and continue to be perpetrated by all sides in that conflict. Liechtenstein was one of 58 States that had called on the Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the ICC. Nine months later, we are still waiting for the Council to take this issue up.

The Syria crisis also best illustrates that the use of the veto and the extensive threat of its use continue to stymie its work. The veto as such is part and parcel of the Charter of the United Nations, which we have all ratified, but it is essential that it not be used contrary to the very purposes and principles contained in that Charter, and that a minimum of accountability be provided in this respect. We have repeatedly called on the permanent members to commit to refraining from the use of the veto in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We welcome the initiative of France to bring this topic to the attention of the international community. Now is the time to make concrete progress towards such a code of conduct. We look forward to discussions among the permanent members on this suggestion and will continue to work through the ACT group to contribute to its success.

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

Mr. Gálvez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like many States Members of the Organization, Chile follows the issue of the working methods of the Security Council with special interest, convinced that transparency and inclusiveness will help to strengthen the capacity and legitimacy of this main organ, and consequently of the United Nations. This interest is reflected in our participation in the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, whose statement, delivered by the representative of Switzerland, we endorse.

We appreciate this open debate organized by Azerbaijan, the fourth consecutive annual open debate on the subject. Clearly, it helps to consolidate a practice that, trust us, will continue in the future.

The transparency and inclusiveness of the Council's work are the objectives that should guide our review of the working methods. We welcome the adoption of presidential note S/2013/515, under the presidency of Argentina, and the commitments contained therein to use and enhance the tools and mechanisms of transparency and better coordination with other bodies of the Organization.

The practice of holding the largest possible number of open and public meetings, informal interactive dialogues and Arria Formula meetings contributes both to the legitimacy of the Council's work and to its quality, since the Council can benefit from understanding the diversity of positions and visions of the States Members of the United Nations. We believe that there is still room to make better use of visions presented in these instances, for example through a programme of work that allows the Council to know these positions prior to undertaking negotiations and adopting documents on the matters in question.

We emphasize the complementarity of the work of regional and subregional organizations with that carried out by the United Nations, and Council in particular. In this regard, we note the high-level open debate on this matter held on 6 August (see S/PV.7015), which, in addition to the participation of senior officials from our region, included briefings by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Union of South American Nations. The Council should continue to deepen its consultations and cooperation with relevant regional and subregional organizations, in line with the distribution of functions under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Note S/2013/515 also addresses coordination with other organs of the Organization, including in the field of peacebuilding. This matter is of particular relevance to the need to strengthen coherence and avoid duplication among different organs. Strengthening the joint work with the Peacebuilding Commission, including the participation of its Chair and the chairs of the different configurations, as appropriate, in meetings of the Council is an important step.

We believe that the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations could expand its scope to

address peacebuilding, establishing links with relevant stakeholders in that domain. The consideration of specific peacebuilding situations would take place only when the Working Group deemed it necessary. That measure would allow for the establishment of a working relationship between the bodies that address these two closely linked topics, while making progress in what is required in the course of reviewing the Peacebuilding Commission with regard to establishing a more fluid and informal dialogue with the Security Council. Further, it could allow us to explore strengthening the interaction with the Economic and Social Council's ad hoc groups that are relevant to the work of this Council.

A fundamental element for achieving greater inclusiveness and transparency is the availability of and easy access to the Council's documentation. We recognize the progress made in that area through the content made available on the Council's web page. This includes background information on the monthly programme of work and the repertoire of practice. We value the efforts of the Secretariat in that area.

We believe that the Security Council should continue to use all the means at its disposal to gather information related to the implementation of its resolutions. In the briefings of commissions and bodies of inquiry created by the United Nations to look into situations on the agenda, we urge the Council to explore mechanisms that allow for a strengthening of interactivity, giving priority to the opportunity to gather greater background information on matters being addressed.

Finally, I should like recall the statement made by the President of Chile in the recent general debate of the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.5), in which he joined the calls for the countries that have the veto right to abstain from using it in situations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing. He also proposed leaving behind the logic of vetoes and replacing it with a logic of special quorums, so that the most relevant decisions, which inevitably affect us all, will be adopted with resounding, broad and representative majorities of the community of nations.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mrs. Andelić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening an open debate on the important issue of the working methods of the Security Council. It is the fourth open debate organized to further discuss the

implementation of presidential note S/2010/507, as well as to address issues of common concern and benefit in regard to improving the Council's working methods.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador María Cristina Perceval for her briefing today and for her able stewardship as the Chair of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

A former Chair of the Informal Working Group, Bosnia and Herzegovina built upon the efforts of the previous incumbents to further promote the transparency and efficiency of the Council's work, including the implementation of presidential note 507. When we held the Chair, we especially raised and promoted the issue of the periodicity of reporting and mandate cycles so as to redistribute the Council's annual workload more more evenly and efficiently. The subsequent Chairs of the Informal Working Group continued those efforts. Moreover, the redistribution launched in December 2011 has continued through 2012 and 2013, since the full cycle of redistribution needs 18 months to implement.

Taking into account the calls for enhanced cooperation by the general membership, Bosnia and Herzegovina raised the issue of further increasing the transparency of the Council's work. To that end, it suggested to the members of the Informal Working Group that they consider the idea of holding regular briefings on the Council's working methods for non-Council Member States. We were and are of the view that such exercises can be of common benefit.

Therefore we commend the end-of-presidency wrap-up sessions and invite the Council members to further intensify informal forms of dialogue with non-members, particularly in the format of Arria formula meetings. We call upon the Council members to fulfil their commitments set out in the presidential note in document S/2013/515, such as maintaining regular communication with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Chairs of the country-specific configurations, enhancing cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and encouraging the subsidiary bodies to enhance transparency in their activities. We encourage further improvement with regard to briefings and consultations by the Council with troop- and police-contributing countries in order to implement peacekeeping mandates more effectively.

With its experience as a member of the Security Council in 2010 and 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina is mindful of the Council's responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security. It recognizes that at a certain early, sensitive stage of work to resolve an issue, efficiency necessitates closed consultations among Council members before views and information are shared with the general membership of the United Nations. However, we would like to express our concern regarding a recent setback in transparency in the Council's work and even within the Council itself. Bosnia and Herzegovina has always been an advocate of the Council's efficiency and accountability, as well as of its transparency.

In closing, I wish to reiterate the position of Bosnia and Herzegovina that improving the working methods of the Security Council should not be seen as an inherent part of the overall reform of the Council, namely, the increase of the permanent and non-permanent seats. Working methods must improve notwithstanding the Council's reform process.

We remain committed to continuing our engagement, together with Council members and the Organization's general membership, in initiatives and dialogue, with a view to improving efficiency, transparency and interactivity in the Council's work for the common benefit.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay;

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to commend the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan for convening this open debate.

Uruguay aligns itself with the statement made this morning by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. As a member of that group, I would like to raise a few specific points on working methods related to peacekeeping, which are shared by ACT members.

United Nations peacekeeping operations are essential for the maintenance of international peace and security and for helping countries make the transition from conflict to sustainable peace. Those operations rely on a particular association among the Council, the Secretariat and the broader United Nations membership, in particular the troop- and police-contributing countries. In order to be effective, the relationship needs to be very well maintained. Triangular cooperation

between the Council, the Secretariat and the troop- and police-contributing countries is crucial in that respect, even as enhancing the quality of that interaction and making it consistently dynamic and substantial remains a challenge. The current context of increasingly complex and robust mandates, risky situations, limited resources and high expectations raise the stakes of United Nations peacekeeping operations and make the Council's working methods, including meaningful engagement with the troop- and police-contributing countries, even more important.

One of the first conclusions reached by ACT members following a preliminary analysis of this issue is that the problem is not a lack of tools or agreed arrangements, but rather that these may not be deployed regularly or consistently. The Charter of the United Nations, Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1353 (2001), and various presidential statements establish or refer to many of those mechanisms, including provisions on early consultation with troop-contributing countries, to be held before mandate creation and renewal; ad hoc meetings at any stage, at the request of troop-contributing countries; information sharing and thematic discussions.

However, there is plenty of room for improvement in their utilization. Certainly, the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations is one of the key tools available to improve the interaction between those who establish mandates and those who implement them, and to strengthen triangular cooperation. In that regard, ACT members congratulate the Permanent Mission of Pakistan, the Chair of the Working Group, on having convened over the past few months three thematic discussions, open to troop- and police-contributing countries, related to very sensitive and critical topics, such as safety and security, the use of modern technology, and the transition and drawdown of peacekeeping operations. The ACT group encourages the continued development and use of that important tool, the consideration of relevant thematic issues and the convening of meetings on specific missions open to troop- and police-contributing countries.

The timeliness and format of consultations with troop-contributing countries are other important aspects to which ACT members believe that improvements have been made but on which further gains can be achieved, for instance by increasing the regularity and predictability of convening timely consultations with troop-contributing countries before the creation or

renewal of mandates. Further, it should be possible to convene ad hoc meetings at any stage, at the request of a troop- or police-contributing country, to address topical concerns, especially in cases where the security and protection of peacekeepers are at stake.

In addition, all actors involved should work towards a more interactive and substantive consultation process. Working methods play an important role in that regard. The timing of and openness to information exchange, including timely access to the Secretary-General's reports, are key ingredients of adequate preparation for such consultations. More informal settings in which relevant stakeholders can exchange their views on a particular mission can also contribute greatly to a better understanding of the main concerns at stake and to finding solutions. Opportunities to listen directly to views from the ground remain a very helpful and valuable tool that should be used as often as possible.

Those are a few examples of how working methods can continue to improve the quality of the discussions and, ultimately, their outcomes as they relate to peacekeeping and in the framework of the Security Council. In that regard, ACT members welcome the latest presidential note S/2013/630 on the enhancement of consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries, which is aligned with the ideas and objectives that ACT promotes. ACT members will continue to remain available and willing to engage in a constructive dialogue on the matter.

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

Mr. Ulibarri (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica thanks Azerbaijan for having organized today's debate. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the 22 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. We wish to offer additional observations in our national capacity.

The premise established in Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, pursuant to which Member States acknowledge that the Security Council acts on their behalf, should function as a two-way street. States Members of the Organization must recognize in effect that the Council acts on our behalf, but the Council must also demonstrate that it acts on our behalf. That responsibility is particularly important to its five permanent members.

We live in an era in which the transparency of decision-making processes and the accountability of representatives to the represented have been established as ever-more solid principles in all organizations, independent of their nature. Presidential note S/2006/507 and its update note S/2010/507, as well as note S/2013/515 adopted in August, mark an important milestone in the history of the Security Council, above all in the area of transparency. I take this opportunity to recognize the work of Argentina as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and to welcome note S/2013/630, adopted yesterday.

Note 507 encompassed many of the concerns of the membership of the Organization and resolved several, at least conceptually. Important progress has been made in transparency and accountability after its adoption.

Nevertheless, an analysis of the Council's practices reveals that the challenge of implementing adopted agreements in a consistent manner remains. Costa Rica believes, for example, that the Council should take even greater interest in the input of those who have a legitimate concern or who would be directly affected by its decisions. Despite the agreements achieved to that end, significant shortcomings persist in practice. In addition, more transparent, direct and clear communication should take place between the Council, its subsidiary bodies and the rest of the Organization.

Another subject that deserves greater attention is the public aspect of the Council's actions. Although it is true that there has been an increase in the number of public meetings in comparison to other years, we are far from the spirit of the norm, which establishes the rule that every meeting of the Council should be public, unless expressly decided otherwise. Without doubt, there are situations that demand the utmost discretion, but we disagree with a practice that has inverted the language of the norm.

It is the Secretariat's duty to facilitate transparency and accountability by offering open formats for all meetings as a first option in the proposed programmes of work prepared by each Council presidency. It is then up to the members of the Council to convince others of the need for a private format, when necessary, as an exception to the rule. In voicing these considerations, I am pleased to say that Costa Rica and Estonia are leading and coordinating a subgroup in the ACT framework to promote transparency within the Security Council.

I would like to highlight several recommendations in that regard. First, we should develop an action plan to implement note 507 in the context of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Secondly, we should continue to improve transparency in the preparation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly by engaging members in an informal, interactive discussion, both as the report is being drafted and when it is brought before the General Assembly.

Thirdly, briefings by United Nations officials to the Council should, as far as possible, be made accessible to all Members, while subsequent consultations may be held in a private setting when necessary.

Fourthly, Costa Rica stresses the importance of the draft resolution on special political missions being considered by the Fourth Committee, one objective of which is to improve transparency. We believe that, in the context of special political missions, transparency cannot and should not be limited to exchanges between the Secretariat and the membership; it should include the Security Council, whose importance is reflected in the simple fact that it decides the overwhelming majority of mandates of special political missions. We encourage the Security Council to continue improving the provision of information to Member States on special political missions.

I close by affirming that the implementation of note 507 requires the ongoing commitment of all members of the Council and the active participation of the General Assembly. Today's important meeting, held at the behest of Azerbaijan, represents a significant step in the right direction.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative from New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): We thank Azerbaijan for convening this important debate, we congratulate Ambassador Perceval on her chairmanship of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and we note that this debate has now become an annual fixture on the Council's programme. Having said that, we think that once a year is not enough; working methods are too important to be relegated to an annual discussion.

Over the past 12 months, we have seen occasions when better working methods might have improved the

quality and effectiveness of outcomes. The Council's engagement with troop-contributing countries while establishing the Force Intervention Brigade in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo could have been much better. Its slow reaction to unfolding political, security and humanitarian crises in Mali and in the Central African Republic are further examples.

We are pleased, however, to observe some minor but positive changes. Presidential note S/2013/515 will be a useful aid to transparency. Wrap-up sessions are now convened with greater frequency, following Pakistan's lead in January. Last week's briefings direct from Addis Ababa and Entebbe were an obvious improvement in the use of technology. But much more must be done to enable the Council more effectively to perform its most neglected Charter responsibilities — those under Chapter VI, concerning conflict prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes.

As New Zealand stressed in this debate last year, preventive initiatives are less costly in terms of resources and lives than peacekeeping or peace enforcement, and are more likely to deliver lasting outcomes that address the root causes of conflict. The Council's attempts over the past year to better fulfil its preventive function by resurrecting horizon-scanning was an important recognition of a problem that must be addressed.

We do recognize, however, that some States have concerns about that format. We have a very open mind on the name, format and modalities, which for us are much less important than the underlying purpose of enabling the Council to look ahead and assess emerging threats to international peace and security, thereby facilitating early and effective responses in supporting or leading mediation and conflict prevention measures. The case of Syria graphically underlines what happens when there is insufficient attention to emerging situations at early stages.

New Zealand also emphasizes that it is not just the Security Council itself which has responsibility for better using the available tools to facilitate effective preventive action by the Council. Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations allows the Secretary-General to bring emerging threats to the Council's attention — a power that should be used more often.

The Council's monthly programme of work might be a useful aid to transparency, as was just emphasized by

the representative of Costa Rica, but it must not become a procedural fetter on the ability of the Secretary-General or Council members to discharge their Charter responsibilities to prevent conflict. Discussions on emerging crises are often going to be very sensitive and are therefore not always best suited to formal Council meetings, and that reality could also be better reflected in Council working methods.

In that same context, it is necessary to find better ways to engage with the States concerned. New Zealand also sees potential for a greater role for Council subsidiary bodies, particularly the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, to help facilitate more active Council roles in conflict prevention. That could lead the Working Group to focus more closely on subregional or country-specific challenges, or to act as a mechanism for more meaningful interaction on conflict analysis and preventive initiatives between the Council and regional and subregional organizations.

Similarly, advances in working methods are needed to address wide concerns held outside the Council about its working partnership with regional and subregional organizations. They have an inherent advantage in identifying emerging threats, they are better placed for early threat identification, they often know the players, and they have a greater stake in preventing conflict. The Council would be much better placed to respond to such threats if it had improved processes for engagement with regional organizations, and we strongly urge that.

Much of what we achieve at the United Nations relies on momentum, so we encourage Council members to take to heart the many messages emerging from today's debate. The range of issues raised by Member States indicates our widespread interest in and concern about working methods. We know that takes time; we know that it takes energy. But given the challenges and expectations of today's world, real and substantial change is needed in the way the Council functions if it is to deliver on its responsibilities; and that is what New Zealand urges today.

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

Ms. Frankinet (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Kingdom of Belgium.

First of all, I would like to thank Azerbaijan, as President of the Security Council, for convening this debate and for preparing the excellent concept paper (S/2013/613, annex) before us.

The Netherlands and Belgium attach great importance to this open debate. It gives the wider membership of the United Nations the opportunity to interact with the Security Council on a topic that is not merely a matter of internal procedure, but that has a profound impact on the way we attempt to make our universal Organization work.

Let me start by acknowledging that real progress has been made over the past few years. The Netherlands and Belgium commend both the permanent and the successive elected members of the Council. The commitments put forward in presidential note S/2013/515, adopted in August, deserve not only our appreciation but expedient implementation.

Nonetheless, further progress on the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council is desirable. It would help to enhance the Security Council's accountability towards other Member States, and would further increase the transparency, legitimacy and effective implementation of its decisions. The concept paper prepared for this meeting contains an interesting overview of the recent work and events on the working methods of the Security Council. It lists a number of good suggestions, virtually all of which the Netherlands and Belgium are happily support. Nevertheless, we would like to draw the Council's attention to some specific ideas.

First, we appreciate the fact that the chairs of the country-specific configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) are invited to brief the Council when the situation in "their" country is being discussed. However, we strongly believe that the Council's work would benefit from allowing the chairs of the PBC country-specific configurations to participate in the much more interactive closed consultations that usually follow the public briefings.

Secondly, we welcome the monthly wrap-up sessions, but believe they could also be much more interactive and thus provide the opportunity for an assessment based on a more analytical approach.

Thirdly, we commend the United Kingdom and Australia for having organized a horizon-scanning debate at the start of their presidencies. The Netherlands and Belgium would favour building on that precedent

to establish horizon-scanning meetings as an integral part of our efforts with regard to preventive diplomacy. Therefore, we encourage other Council members to hold horizon-scanning meetings on a regular basis.

Fourthly, the cooperation between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations in the area of peace and security has greatly improved and become more diversified. We commend the Council in that regard. Regional organizations should be heard even more frequently in the Council, not only on thematic issues, but in discussions of the situations in countries in which they are involved. Furthermore, relations between the Council and legal institutions, such as the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration, could be strengthened, given their potential role in conflict prevention and resolution.

Lastly, the Netherlands and Belgium would appreciate earlier notification of certain options considered by the Council in cases where said options have possible budgetary implications that affect the entire membership. In that regard, the cost of peacekeeping missions in particular comes to mind.

As I said, the Netherlands and Belgium value the efforts that have been made so far to improve the working methods of the Security Council. The suggestions in the President's concept paper deserve further careful consideration. We count on the Security Council members, in particular the permanent members, to join their efforts with the wider membership to continue to enhance the transparency, legitimacy, effectiveness and interactivity of the Security Council.

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

Mr. Eler (Turkey): I would like to thank the Azerbaijani presidency for organizing this open debate on a subject that is of particular importance to the entire membership of the United Nations, and for preparing and circulating the concept paper (S/2013/613, annex) on the implementation of note S/2010/507.

This debate has been very timely in terms of re-addressing the issues on the working methods of the Security Council, as we are fast approaching again a time of change in the membership of the Council. I would also like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Perceval for her work and efforts in her capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Turkey attaches great importance to the efforts to improve the Council's working methods, which is an important component of the comprehensive reform of the Council. We have long advocated that the Council is in need of a change in terms of its structure and representation, as well as its working methods.

The world is constantly changing and a number of developments are unfolding before our eyes with each passing day. That is why it is our sincere wish that the Council adapt itself to the current realities of the global political, security and economic scene. As it is our common responsibility to maintain the credibility of this body, we should spare no effort to enhance its efficiency and transparency, and work sincerely to ensure that its work is inclusive and effective. In that sense, Turkey welcomes the steps taken in recent years, particularly through the milestone presidential note S/2010/507 and the subsequent complementary notes. On the other hand, there is still much to be done in terms of the implementation of the measures set out in those notes.

First and foremost, Turkey believes that the Council's dialogue with non-Council members should be further improved. The entire membership expects more effective and frequent use of public meetings, informal interactive dialogues and Arrria Formula meetings. That will enable better communication and interaction, and provide more opportunity to the wider membership to have more focused involvement in the issues of common concern. With regard to enhancing the transparency of the Council, we welcome the recently increased use of wrap-up sessions and encourage all members of the Council to hold such meetings at the end of their presidencies. At the same time, we are cognizant of the need for the Council's to conduct its own deliberations for decision-making.

Secondly, we need a better structured dialogue and communication between the Council and other United Nations bodies and regional organizations. A regular and more substantive exchange of views among the Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Peacebuilding Commission would not only enhance the efficiency of the United Nations system, but also augment the transparency, openness and inclusiveness of the Council itself. We also think that the Council should expand its consultation and cooperation with other international and relevant regional organizations, such as the Peace and Security

Council of the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States.

Thirdly, we are of the view that the Council should make better use of measures under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Without any prejudice to its right to mandate measures under Chapter VII, the Council, as the primary responsible organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, should give some thought to utilizing different ways to reach a peaceful settlement of disputes. In that sense, we welcome the horizon-scanning briefings provided by the Secretariat. We believe that those briefings are important in terms of conflict prevention and wish to see such meetings in all upcoming programmes of work of the Council.

Finally, I would like to touch upon an aspect related to the Council's internal practice, which is again of particular importance. While taking note of presidential note S/2012/937, Turkey believes that the Council should act in due transparency and inclusivity in the appointment of the chairs of the subsidiary organs and the selection of the penholders.

While fully acknowledging the positive developments related to the working methods of the Security Council, we believe that there is always room for further improvement. In the end, all Members of the United Nations deserve a more democratic, more transparent and more efficient Security Council, which we believe is also a requirement for maintaining the credibility of our Organization, the United Nations.

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

Mr. Sajdik (Austria): I would first like to thank the Azerbaijani presidency for convening today's open debate. Austria aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group. The issues of accountability, coherence and transparency of the Security Council, which the group aims to enhance, are extremely important to my delegation. As a member of the ACT group, Austria will now limit this intervention to two specific points.

First, we believe that efforts to improve the working methods of the Council must also focus on strengthening the interaction between the Council and the United Nations membership at large. This applies particularly to United Nations peacekeeping

missions, which is the United Nations flagship activity. Resolution 1353 (2001) and last week's presidential note S/2013/6130, on the enhancement of consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries, among other Council documents, provide a very good basis for an intensified engagement of the Council with those countries. We call on the Security Council to make more frequent and effective use of those existing tools. It is the contributing countries that have their boots on the ground and that must implement the mandates of the missions.

As practically all United Nations peacekeeping operations have become more challenging and multifaceted, the need for dialogue and information-sharing has increased. Troop- and police-contributing countries should be consulted by both the Secretariat and the Council, not only on a regular basis but also and particularly on an ad hoc basis and at short notice, in the light of the sometimes rapidly evolving developments in the respective areas of operation.

Let me address a second point that has been very dear to my delegation for many years — the rule of law. Thirteen months ago, Member States at the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels recognized the positive contribution of the Security Council to the rule of law in discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. On that same occasion, the General Assembly encouraged the Security Council to first ensure that sanctions imposed by the Council are carefully targeted and, secondly, to further develop fair and clear procedures. That reflects a conviction that the implementation of sanctions must respect the rule of law. Austria strongly believes that the United Nations must practice what it preaches. The rule of law must apply not only outside the United Nations, but also within the United Nations, in particular in situations in which actions by the United Nations and its organs directly affect individual rights.

The United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular should lead the way in this regard. As former Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities during its term as a non-permanent member of the Council in 2009 and 2010, Austria worked hard to improve the procedures under the sanctions regime of resolution 1267 (1999) in terms of due process. Resolution 1904

(2009) of 17 December 2009, which established the Office of the Ombudsperson, was a significant step forward in improving the fairness and transparency of the Al-Qaida sanctions regime and enhanced the rule of law in the implementation of Council decisions. We therefore reiterate our call on the Security Council to continue on that path and extend the mandate of the Ombudsperson, which has been further improved in the meantime, to other sanctions regimes.

In concluding, I would like to emphasize that the Council's working methods have developed remarkably over the years, yet they remain a work in progress. As the work of the Security Council has to constantly adapt to new challenges and changed circumstances, so should the Council's working methods. Engagement with troop-contributing countries and respect for the rule of law are thereby key to making the Council's work more effective and legitimate.

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

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Sir, for having convened this open debate on the working methods of the Security Council. As stated in the concept paper that quite rightly guides our debate (S/2013/613, annex), this is an important matter of common interest. The Security Council is a body of crucial importance to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is in everybody's interest that the Council efficiently exercise the functions assigned to it by the Charter of the United Nations. We welcome the awareness of that fact on the part of the members of the Security Council, as reflected in the note by the President dated 28 August (S/2013/515).

There is no doubt that the authority and influence of the Security Council would be enhanced if there were more opportunities to include the wider United Nations membership in its work. Spain believes that this objective must be the guiding light for the Security Council's activities.

In recent years, progress has been made in increasing the Security Council's permeability. The contributions of such countries as Portugal, Belgium, Japan, Slovakia, Panama, Bosnia and Herzegovina and India have been of great help. Costa Rica, Jordan and Liechtenstein also deserve to be mentioned for the role they have played in encouraging that collective reflection. I also take the opportunity to recognize the Republic of Argentina

and its Permanent Representative, Mrs. María Cristina Perceval, for the way in which she has led the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

The members of the Security Council have committed themselves to implementing the measures contained in presidential note S/2010/507. As we have stated on previous occasions, we are reasonably pleased with the implementation of measures concerning the monthly programme of work of the Security Council, such as the publication of the tentative forecast, the briefings by incoming Presidents or the periodic updates of the programme of work. We are perfectly aware of the fact that, for reasons of urgency, sometimes the most sensitive dossiers must be dealt with in meetings that cannot be announced far enough in advance. The Security Council must be able to react promptly to the most urgent threats to international peace and security.

This year we have witnessed an updating of the practice of holding a wrap-up session at the close of the month. As stated by one representative of a Council member, these sessions are like a two-faced Janus, keeping the Council's focus on the recent past in order to draw lessons for the immediate future. We thank Pakistan for resurrecting this practice, which had hardly ever been used until this year. We also heartily congratulate South Korea, Rwanda, Togo, the United Kingdom and Argentina on having continued this practice. In September, the Australian presidency opted for an interactive end-of-month meeting with representatives of States not members of the Security Council. We believe that is also a valid option for responding to the growing need for transparency.

Spain supports the practice of holding horizon-scanning meetings at the direction of the Secretariat. I would suggest that such meetings, which are held at the beginning of a country's presidency of the Council, be conveniently opened to all Member States.

The measures included in your concept paper, Mr. President, have our principled support. Moreover, I would like to highlight as a matter of particular interest the need to continue to promote the following measures: an increase in the number of public meetings; the enhancement of a transparent and inclusive process of negotiation within the Council; an increase in the interaction between the Council and troop- and police-contributing countries; and more time dedicated to interaction and dialogue with regional and

subregional organizations. The final goal, as already stated, is to increase the transparency of the work of the Security Council. The work of this organ must follow procedures that contribute to reinforcing its authority as a *sine qua non* for gaining the support of the entire international community. The working methods should therefore serve that higher goal; otherwise, they will undermine the political and moral authority of the Council.

I will conclude with on a sensitive question related to the topic of today's debate: the use of the veto. Spain supports the limitation of its use. Specifically, we urge that a practice be introduced whereby the reasons for its use be explained when that occurs. More important still, we advocate for members to refrain from its use in cases of serious crimes such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We therefore welcome the call by France to develop a code of conduct for moving towards that goal. The Council can rest assured that we remain fully ready to contribute to such measures.

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

Mr. Dehghani (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the pleasure to speak today on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). At the outset, I would like to convey the Movement's appreciation to Azerbaijan as President of the Security Council for having convened this important open debate to discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of the measures set out in the note by the President of the Security Council of 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507). This open debate could help us to direct discussions towards enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the work of the Security Council and to meet the expectations of the general membership of the United Nations.

This debate is the sixth debate on the working methods of the Council. The increased frequency in recent years of holding such debates is indicative of the fact that Member States attach great importance to this matter. The same interest has been shown by the Non-Aligned Movement.

NAM has always emphasized the need for the Council to increase transparency and take a balance approach to interaction with non-members. Some positive steps have been taken by the Security Council pursuant to note 507. The Movement appreciates the work leading to the note by the President of the

Security Council contained in document S/2013/515, on enhancing efficiency and transparency as well as on the interaction and dialogue with non-members of the Security Council, and emphasizes the importance of the efforts of Ambassador María Cristina Perceval, Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which were eloquently elaborated upon in her briefing today. The points listed in the note are very close to the position of NAM with regard to the working methods of the Security Council.

NAM urges all States to uphold the primacy of, and full respect for, the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations pertaining to the functions and powers of the Assembly and calls on the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council to conduct regular discussions and coordination among themselves regarding the agenda and programme of work of the respective principal organs in order to establish increased coherence and complementarity among those organs in a mutually reinforcing manner, respectful of one other's mandates and with a view to generating mutual understanding among them.

We believe that the Security Council should avoid resorting to Chapter VII of the Charter as a tool for addressing issues that do not necessarily pose a threat to international peace and security. Rather, it should fully utilize such means to settle disputes and prevent conflict as negotiation, mediation, arbitration and judicial decisions and other provisions of relevant chapters of the Charter of the United Nations, including Chapters VI and VIII, before invoking Chapter VII, which should be a measure of last resort.

The Non-Aligned Movement welcomes the use of wrap-up and informal briefing meetings, pursuant to the note by the President contained in document S/2012/922. However, NAM believes that the issues discussed in the wrap-up meetings should be limited to the items and issues discussed at the Security Council within the programme of work of each month. It also welcomes the commitment reiterated by Council members to continue that practice and encourages all efforts to sustain and improve such meetings, which are of great relevance to the broader membership.

With regard to the reporting practice by the Council, we welcome the informal meetings between the presidency of the Council and Member States on the preparation of the annual report of the Security Council, which can help enhance the quality of such

reports. We call on the Security Council to submit a more explanatory, comprehensive and analytical annual report to the General Assembly that assesses the work of the Council, including such cases in which the Council has failed to act, and the views expressed by its members during its consideration of its agenda.

Furthermore, NAM calls on the Security Council to elaborate on the circumstances under which it adopts different outcomes, whether resolutions, presidential statements, press statements or "elements" to the press. It calls on the Security Council, pursuant to Article 15, paragraph 1, and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, to submit special reports for the consideration of the General Assembly. It further calls on the Security Council to ensure that its monthly assessments are comprehensive and analytical, and issued in a timely fashion. The General Assembly may consider proposing parameters for the elaboration of such assessments.

NAM welcomes the increase in the number of public meetings and expects that the quantitative increase of those meetings shall be associated with a qualitative improvement by providing more opportunities and meaningful exchanges of view to take into account the contributions of non-Council members, in particular those whose interests are or may be directly affected by possible decisions of the Council. Furthermore, concerned non-members of the Council should be given an opportunity to express their views and positions on such briefings. The general observations and positions formulated by numerous non-members of the Security Council during its debates or open debates should be properly taken into account in any possible outcome of those debates and should also be reflected in the Council's annual report. NAM appreciates the convening of Arria Formula meetings as a practical way to ensure greater interaction with non-members of the Council and regional and subregional organizations.

We welcome the commitments to maintain regular communication with the Peacebuilding Commission, make more effective use of public meetings, and invite the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Chairs of its country-specific configurations, as appropriate, to participate in formal Council meetings and informal interactive dialogues. NAM also welcomes measures taken to improve consultations with troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries as part of the effort to plan and execute peacekeeping operations more effectively and with

clearer mandates, and expects the finalization of a presidential note on the enhancement of consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries. The Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations should continue to involve TCCs frequently and intensively in its deliberations through sustained, regular and timely interaction. NAM appreciates the meetings of the Working Group held this year.

The Movement believes that further steps are needed, along with the necessary political will of Member States, in particularly the permanent members of the Council, to improve the working methods of the Council through both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Transparency, accountability and consistency are the key elements that the Security Council should observe in all its activities, approaches and procedures. Every effort should be made to render the Council more democratic, representative and accountable. In that way, the Security Council will be able to deal more efficiently and effectively with its mounting workload and with the multiplicity and complexity of the issues on its agenda in maintaining international peace and security. The Non-Aligned Movement stands ready to contribute to the achievement of those goals.

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

Mr. Tommasi (Italy): I wish to join previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate on the working methods of the Security Council.

Today, more than ever, the international community needs and expects an efficient and effective Security Council that is able to take prompt action, in accordance with its mandate, for the maintenance of international peace and security. At a time of growing frustration and concern within the international community over the persistence of violent crises, improved working methods are crucial to enhancing the Security Council's ability to carry out its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Transparency, openness, efficiency and interaction with the rest of the Member States are needed to foster a sense of ownership of the Council by the international community and to avoid the misperception that the Council is an autonomous body.

We appreciate the improvements that have already been made to adapt the Council's working methods to

changing realities. I am referring, for instance, to the increasing number of open debates, the organization of informal briefing sessions by Security Council Presidents on their monthly work, and the strengthened cooperation with regional organizations. As a member State of the European Union (EU), Italy commends the attention dedicated to cooperation between the EU and the United Nations. But more needs to be done to enhance transparency on, access to and participation in, the Council.

Some ideas for further improvements have already been mentioned in the concept paper (S/2013/613, annex) circulated before the meeting — for which I thank you, Mr. President — and others have been brought up today by colleagues.

I wish to draw the Council's attention to two commitments taken by the President of the Security Council, namely, first, maintaining regular communication with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Chairs of its country-specific configurations, and secondly, improving consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs and PCCs). We support the involvement of the PBC and the Chairs of the country-specific configurations in the formal meetings of the Council. The PBC has the potential to play an increasingly supportive role in the post-conflict processes of stabilization and has a capacity for analysis of peacebuilding dynamics that is useful to the Security Council. It is equally important to strengthen the Council's consultations with TCCs and PCCs, especially when mission mandates are being defined or renewed. A perspective from the field is fundamental, especially from those who are being called on to carry out the mandate.

Italy, a major contributor of troops to United Nations peacekeeping, will lend its efforts, as always, to giving TCCs a greater role. We therefore welcome the commitments undertaken in the note by the President of the Security Council issued yesterday (S/2013/630) and we thank the Permanent Representative of Argentina, Ambassador María Cristina Perceval, for her efforts as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Improving working methods is part of the Security Council reform process. It is one of the five pillars of the intergovernmental negotiations on reform. As the General Assembly agreed by consensus in its decision 62/557, we have pledged to deal with the five pillars at the same time to achieve comprehensive reform. We

remain convinced that hurried and divisive piecemeal approaches must be avoided. There is no alternative to a comprehensive agreement. Partial solutions will not lead to a genuine reform of the Security Council. Only a comprehensive solution — including working methods — can lead to a reform, shared by the whole membership, that will yield a Security Council better able to cope with the growing challenges of today.

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

Ms. Tan (Singapore): I thank Azerbaijan for convening this meeting and for its concept paper on today's open debate (S/2013/613, annex). I also thank Argentina for its work as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

Improvements in the working methods of the Security Council, especially in its transparency towards the General Assembly, are important to small States like Singapore. The reality is that small States are unlikely to obtain a permanent seat in whatever new configuration that might emerge from an overall reform of the Council in the future.

In the current situation, it is also increasingly challenging for small States to be elected as non-permanent Council members. Campaigns for contested and uncontested seats on the Council are becoming financially exorbitant and resource-intensive. Of the 70 States Members of the United Nations that have never been elected as members of the Security Council, 50 are members of the Forum of Small States. The small States that are elected to the Council also face constraints. Most small States can be elected to the Council only once every several decades, given resource constraints. By the time they have mastered Security Council processes, their terms are over and the next generation has to start from scratch when they are elected.

Nevertheless, many small States continue to experience first hand the consequences of the failure to maintain international peace and security. The work of the Council remains of profound importance to us. Accordingly, reforms that increase the transparency of the work and deliberations of the Council are critical to small States.

We welcome the Council's efforts to improve its practices as outlined in the series of presidential notes adopted since 2010, including convening more open

debates, more Arria Formula meetings, consultations with troop-contributing countries and monthly briefings on the Security Council's programme of work. Those initiatives have helped to improve the transparency of the Council with regard to the General Assembly.

However, the implementation of the recommendations and proposals contained in the five presidential notes (S/2010/507, S/2012/402, S/2012/922, S/2012/937 and S/2013/515) has been limited, slow and vary from presidency to presidency of the Council. For example, notwithstanding their substantive briefings, which we support, we also believe that non-members should have more opportunities to provide input to the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies. Furthermore, some of those initiatives have been implemented with an eye to the letter rather than the spirit of the proposals. Many of the briefings and reports are largely descriptive of the Council's work. While we thank the various presidencies for convening wrap-up meetings, we also note that such meetings have not been consistently held and tend to comprise set statements by Security Council members with general descriptions of meetings held and resolutions adopted. In our view, the Council could do more to increase interactivity, deepen the level of analysis and foster greater critical reflection in its engagement with the General Assembly.

A good place to start would be the forthcoming annual report of the Council. Instead of simply being a descriptive and voluminous compilation of data and information on the work of the Council, we hope that this year's report will be more concise and analytical. For example, it could include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Council's decisions as well as lessons learned.

Last month, we welcomed the unanimous adoption of resolution 2118 (2013), on the elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. But let us not forget the deep unhappiness in the United Nations membership and the wider world at the impotency of the Council prior to that adoption in the face of the violence and atrocities in the crisis in Syria.

The use of the veto is the crux of the problem. Singapore therefore reiterates its request for the permanent members of the Council to consider refraining from using their vetoes to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In that regard, we would be interested to hear the reactions of the other permanent members to the proposals by the French

President on a code of conduct on the use of the veto. Furthermore, we urge the permanent members to explain to the General Assembly their reasons for using the veto or their intention to do so, in particular with regard to its consistency with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. That is particularly pertinent at times when the veto is used to block action intended to maintain international peace and security.

The Security Council has been given the primary responsibility by the Members of the United Nations for maintaining international peace and security, and special privileges have been given to the permanent members to enable them to carry out that mandate. However, the Council does not discharge its responsibility in isolation, and it needs the support of the States Members of the United Nations, notably for funding and providing troops for the Council's mandated operations. Given that relationship between the Council and the wider United Nations membership, it is incumbent upon the Council to increase the transparency of its engagement with the General Assembly.

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

Mr. Govender (South Africa): My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on Security Council working methods and for developing the concept paper for this debate (S/2013/613, annex). We thank you for your constructive approach in maintaining a practice that we hope becomes a permanent feature of this important organ of the United Nations, which has yet to reform.

We would also like to thank Argentina, as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, for continuing to assess the implementation of presidential note S/2010/507.

South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Like other delegations, we acknowledge the progress made by the Security Council over the past few years in improving its working methods and attempting to make the Council more transparent and inclusive with regard to those methods. In both our recently completed terms as an elected member of the Council, we consistently endeavoured to encourage

the Council to engage more regularly with the broader United Nations membership and regional organizations when addressing its various agenda items. We are proud of our modest achievements in that regard, which include regularizing annual engagements between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and — having served as Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution — involving the broader United Nations membership and non-State entities in the Working Group's discussions.

But more must be done, and we believe that the various proposals and recommendations made today and at debates of this nature to come are intended to be contributions of a constructive nature, designed to enhance the effectiveness, transparency, inclusiveness and credibility of the Security Council. The Council's adoption in August of presidential note S/2013/515 is a step towards maintaining that momentum, with the commitment made by Council members to the 10 steps towards greater transparency outlined in that document.

In addition to those commitments, all of which South Africa strongly supports, we wish to add additional recommendations that can further contribute to the Council's more effective functioning in the execution of its mandates. They include maintaining the practice of field visits and even mini-missions by the Council as well as its subsidiary bodies, in order to enhance the Council's understanding of the situation on the ground and contribute to informed decision-making; and spreading country-specific files — otherwise managed as an exclusive domain or prerogative of some permanent members — more widely among elected members. Such exclusiveness contributes to an inflexible approach to dealing with Council resolutions, which are in fact a mandate for all of those who serve on the Council. Engagement with regional organizations should be based on the principle of subsidiarity and done in a cohesive and organized manner. We also recommend that such engagements should be acknowledged and included in the Secretary-General's reports. And we suggest a longer lead time on all Security Council reports provided to Council members before consultations, especially at the time of mandate renewals.

Predictability in the working methods of the Security Council is integral to ensuring that there is consistency in the way various matters are handled. It has been an unfortunate reality in some cases that

the Council has been perceived as being selective in addressing certain issues, which we ascribe to inconsistency born out of the provisional nature of the Council's rules of procedure. Inextricably linked to that is the notion of some members of the Council approaching matters on the Council's agenda on the basis of narrow national interests, writ large against the Council's primary mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is reflected in the Security Council's inability to resolve certain conflicts, Syria being the most recent case in point. That unfortunate reality has furthermore resulted in many Security Council decisions being either ignored or flagrantly undermined.

The situations of Palestine and Western Sahara are but two clear examples of how detrimental narrow national interests can be in frustrating the lofty objective of maintaining international peace and security. In the case of Western Sahara, we have witnessed how selective small groups, some of which are not even Council members, have a greater influence on the text of resolutions than the Council members themselves. The subsequent weakening of the text of that annual resolution has resulted in the Security Council not being able to implement its own decisions. We have witnessed a similar unfortunate approach in dealing with the situation in the Middle East, Palestine in particular. The Council has repeatedly failed to speak in unison on that matter, thereby being unable to issue even a media statement when the two parties to the conflict resumed direct talks earlier this year. Since September 2000, the State of Palestine has written approximately 473 letters to the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly regarding the ongoing crisis in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, the most recent of which was submitted on 17 October. In the absence of any significant decision over the past two years by the Council, whether in the form of a resolution or a presidential or press statement, it is our consequent assessment that the Security Council has unfortunately not found it appropriate to reflect seriously on the content of those hundreds of written testimonies by one party to the conflict, namely, the State of Palestine, highlighting numerous violations of international law and obligations of States party to resolutions adopted by the Council that go blatantly unheeded.

Such approaches unfortunately put in question the Council's credibility in discharging its clear mandate. The debate on working methods is but one important

part of the greater whole of the debate on Council reform. We therefore remain convinced that greater legitimacy and effectiveness, including in its working methods, will prevail when the Council becomes more representative.

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

Mr. Umemoto (Japan): I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your initiative in holding this debate on the working methods of the Security Council.

We believe that Japan has been a leading contributor to improvements in Security Council working methods. When Japan was on the Council, we, as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, issued presidential note S/2006/507 in 2006, as well as its revision in 2010 (S/2010/507). We also issued a working methods handbook, which included the presidential note and the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council. Based on our proposals, the Council's interaction with troop- and police-contributing countries has increased. We are proud of our country's contribution to enhancing the transparency of the Council's working methods through such efforts.

We are pleased that the Informal Working Group has continued to hold discussions on improving the Council's working methods under the leadership of subsequent Chairs, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Portugal and Argentina. We can see progress in efficiency in areas such as reviewing the mandate cycles of the relevant Security Council resolutions. In that context, I would like to voice my appreciation to Ambassador María Cristina Perceval, Permanent Representative of Argentina and Chair of the Informal Working Group, for her contribution, including her work on the presidential note issued this August (S/2013/515).

However are those achievements enough? Are the Security Council working methods transparent enough? I am afraid that the answer is "not quite". For instance, many consultations in the Council are still being held in a closed and exclusive format. We even hear complaints from elected members of the Council that they were not involved in the discussions on the situation in Syria, which were conducted only among permanent members. In that regard, I highly appreciate the President's initiative in taking on the

topic of “Ensuring a transparent and inclusive process of negotiation within the Council” in today’s debate.

While we remain strongly committed to improving the working methods, there are, unfortunately, limits to what can be done from outside the Security Council to ensure a transparent process of internal negotiations within the Council. In that regard, I sincerely hope that the members of the Council, especially those with permanent seats, will do more to enhance its transparency.

Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations stipulates that we, the Member States, agree to accept the decisions of the Security Council. Yet, that article alone does not necessarily guarantee the legitimacy of the Council’s decisions. Improving the Council’s working methods is necessary, but insufficient in enhancing the Council’s legitimacy. It is crucial that the States Members of the United Nations accelerate negotiations on Security Council reform to generate concrete outcomes in the matter.

The Security Council as is currently composed does not reflect the geopolitical realities of the century and does not function as designed. The situation in Syria has clearly demonstrated that dysfunction of the Security Council.

Let us recall our leaders’ commitment made at the 2005 World Summit and reflected in its Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) to achieve an early reform of the Security Council. In that regard, I appreciate the recent initiatives by His Excellency Mr. John Ashe, current President of the General Assembly, to promote proactively the reform process, as he clearly stated in his letter of 22 October.

By 2015, when the United Nations marks its seventieth anniversary, concrete outcomes in Security Council reform will be necessary. I invite all Member States to spare no effort towards that goal.

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

Mr. Wittig (Germany): As the issues on the agenda of the Security Council become increasingly complex, so do its day-to-day work and decision-making processes. Other United Nations organs and institutions, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations—all of them—make important contributions to the work of the Council and the fulfilment of its Charter-mandated role. The media and wider public are also important,

particularly in times of the Internet and Twitter. All of that should be seen as an opportunity, not as a burden, to the Council. It requires enhanced transparency and efficiency of the Council as well as interaction with the wider United Nations membership and the relevant stakeholders.

The Council has come a long way, most recently with the adoption of the presidential note contained in document S/2013/515. The note contains many useful aspects, including on the increased use of the Arria Formula, closer involvement of the Peacebuilding Commission and the use of wrap-up meetings by the presidency. We encourage the members of the Council, especially the permanent members, to ensure that the commitment made in the note also translates into action.

Other issues remain to be addressed. As that is an ongoing process, improvements must be sought on multiple fronts. In that context, we encourage the States members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group to continue their important efforts in that regard.

We also highly appreciate the proposal made by French Foreign Minister Fabius to refrain from using the veto in situations of atrocity crimes. During Germany’s recent Council membership, I witnessed first-hand the deadlock in the Council caused by three double vetoes and, more important, the terrible consequences they had for the Syrian people. The French proposal is therefore an important initiative of a permanent member of the Council and should contribute to fostering the overall discussion of the reform of the Security Council.

As important as the improvement of the Council’s working methods may be, only comprehensive, structural reform will enable the Council to more effectively tackle the challenges of today’s world. Such a reform is long overdue. As the United Nations nears its seventieth session of the General Assembly in 2015, the time has come for action.

We therefore welcome the initiative taken by the President of the General Assembly, Ambassador John Ashe, to task an advisory group with the drafting of a negotiation text that adequately reflects current positions on Council reform and provides options on the way forward. We hope that such a text will finally enable Member States to engage in real give-and-take negotiations. Germany stands ready to engage constructively in those negotiations.

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

Mr. Donoghue (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the comprehensive statement delivered by my Swiss colleague on behalf of the 22-member Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, a cross-regional grouping of Member States established earlier this year to press for a more accountable, coherent and transparent Security Council. Ireland is pleased to be a founding member of ACT. We care deeply about the United Nations and how each of its institutions works. And we believe that there is abundant evidence for the proposition that the Security Council's working methods are in urgent need of improvement.

Among the points to which Ireland attaches particular importance in the statement delivered on behalf of the ACT are first, the welcome we give to the proposal by France that the five permanent members of the Council could voluntarily regulate their right to exercise the veto in the case of mass atrocity crimes; secondly, the appreciation we express for the greater level of interactivity with the Council recently, which has been achieved through, for instance, horizon-scanning meetings. It is clearly desirable that briefings take place regularly on situations where populations are at risk of mass atrocities.

The ACT group was established in May to develop proposals for concrete action to improve the Council's working methods and to build momentum around that agenda. All United Nations States Members have a legitimate stake in how the Security Council is run. After all, the Council was established to ensure prompt and effective action on behalf of the full membership. We hope that we can persuade the United Nations membership as a whole of the need for urgent action to reform the Council's method of operation and ways to communicate and interact with the wider membership.

We want to work constructively and cooperatively with the members of the Security Council in encouraging a more businesslike and responsive approach. We could accurately be termed — and have been termed — a group of friends of the Security Council, supportive but also frank and direct, the hallmarks of true friendship. Just to be clear, we are taking no position on issues relating to the reform, composition or enlargement of the Council.

Improvements in relation to the Council's working methods are already under way, and we readily recognize

them. We welcome the presidential note of 28 August (S/2013/515), on transparency and improvement of the Council's dialogue with non-Council members and bodies.

As a co-lead with Uruguay on the peacekeeping dimension of the Council's work, Ireland warmly welcomes the commitments of the presidential note contained in document S/2013/630, on the enhancement of consultations with troop-contributing countries (TCCs) and police-contributing countries (PCCs). The challenge now is for Council members to ensure the full and consistent implementation of that presidential note, and other preceding resolutions, statements and notes on peacekeeping working methods.

Ireland was pleased to respond positively this year when we were asked to supply military personnel to reinforce and stabilize the mission of the politically sensitive United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. As a significant peacekeeping troop contributor, we are strongly of the view that a more dynamic, interactive and meaningful partnership among Council members, the Secretariat, TCCs and PCCs will benefit all parties.

On peacekeeping and across a broad range of topics, the ACT group will continue to work for constructive and cooperative engagement with Council members on practical steps that could improve the way in which the Council does business.

Finally, we commend Azerbaijan for organizing today's debate as an important step in that process.

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

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): On behalf of the Republic of Maldives, let me thank the Azerbaijani presidency for convening this open debate on the working methods of the Council. Let me furthermore thank Ambassador María Cristina Perceval of Argentina for her briefing in her capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions. The Maldives also thanks the presidency for its note of 28 August (S/2013/515) and welcomes the continued efforts at ensuring transparency and coherence within the Council's working methods.

The Maldives has the honour of associating itself with the statement made by the representative of Switzerland in its capacity as coordinator of the

Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, a cross-regional group made up of 22 member States.

According to Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council acts on behalf of all Member States. That universal representation needs to be reflected in fully transparent decisions and a process that leaves no room for secrecy. It is only right that all Member States have a clear understanding of the present current of the Council — deviating from past practice. Business as usual will leave us with the usual unsatisfying results.

There is a necessity for all Member States to be better informed with regard to the Council's deliberations. As is the case with the General Assembly, the Maldives believes that draft documents of the Security Council should be made available to all Member States in a more timely and appropriate manner. Further in line with the Charter, we would welcome more frequent interactive dialogues and presentations of special reports.

While we welcome the informational briefings at the beginning of each presidency, the Maldives calls on Council members to reflect on the month's work in the form of wrap-up meetings, critically and proactively. Through honest reflection, we hope to see a more equal distribution of work between the permanent and non-permanent members of the Council. The prevailing disparity remains a fundamental flaw of the Council, which is constantly being illustrated. We have seen it when negotiations are limited only to permanent members and we have seen it when, similarly, briefings have also been limited. Recently, the decision of the Secretary-General to brief only the permanent members with regard to the situation in Syria saw that failing extend to the Secretariat, which is deeply disappointing.

Only a reform of the Council's structure will truly make this body more representative, transparent, efficient and legitimate. In the meantime, we welcome the proposal made by France suggesting that the permanent members themselves could voluntarily forego their right to exercise veto in reaction to crimes of mass atrocity. We believe that this pledge would contribute to a more effective response to crisis and to a stronger implementation of the Council's own agenda, thereby promoting the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore call for an open and engaging dialogue between the ACT group and all the permanent members of the Council. We would encourage other permanent members to explore further the proposal made by France.

The views of Member States have to be taken into account in the decision-making process of the Security Council. The use of the right to veto, or the intention to do so, should have to be explained, in particular with regard to its consistency with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and applicable international law. That would lead to a much greater degree of transparency in the decision-making process and make morally ambiguous and legally inadmissible arguments less likely.

The Maldives sincerely hopes that both permanent and non-permanent members commit not only in word but also in action to practices that conform to higher standards of accountability, coherence and transparency.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Azerbaijan.

We commend the permanent representative of Argentina, Ambassador María Cristina Perceval for her dedicated efforts as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. We also commend former Chairs of the Working Group for their valuable contributions. We acknowledge the role that the Working Group is playing to advance ways to further enhance the transparency, accountability and overall efficiency of the Council's work.

The Security Council's working methods continue to raise great interest among the broader membership. Today's open debate is yet another illustration of the priority attention given by Member States to that topic. Almost one year has passed since the Council's last open debate (see S/PV.6870), which raised a number of important issues that required more effort and resolute steps towards a solution. Meanwhile, the Council has continued to further implement the presidential note contained in document S/2010/507 and has agreed on several measures to enhance its efficiency and transparency — in addition to its existing interaction and dialogue with non-Council members and other bodies, as reproduced in the two notes by the President adopted earlier this year. More attention has been paid to achieving broader participation by Council members in the decision-making process by providing opportunities to hear the views of the broader membership on the working methods of the Council. The Council has also discussed ways and means to enhance its interactivity

with non-Council Member States and to promote its responsiveness to their inputs and contributions, as well as to improve Security Council communication with the Peacebuilding Commission, troop- and police-contributing countries and relevant regional and subregional organizations.

Despite a slight decrease in the number of public meetings of the Council in comparison with the same period last year, the trend of holding more public meetings, including in the form of briefings and debates, is encouraging. At the same time, the quality of such public meetings depends mostly on the Council's readiness to take into consideration the views and contributions of non-Council Member States, including through a reflection of their proposals and inputs in the outcome of public meetings. The holding of annual open debates on the topic under consideration is a good opportunity to further encourage the Council's efforts towards improving its working methods, reviewing the implementation of note 507 and subsequent documents adopted by the Council and identifying positive trends and practices by proposing new ideas on enhancing transparency and the efficiency of the Council.

A significant number of proposals were submitted and discussed in previous years, in the course of both open debates and deliberations within the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Those discussions illustrate the remaining obstacles and the need for more efforts towards addressing existing differences. We hope that the Council will initiate a process of genuine reforms of the Security Council to meet the expectations of the international community. It should be noted that the

reluctance — and sometimes even unwillingness — to change stereotypes by preserving existing practices complicates the process of reaching agreement on matters of importance to the United Nations membership.

Another important issue that requires additional efforts is the need for the Council's review of the implementation of its own decisions. It is unacceptable when resolutions of the Security Council that contain imperative demands for concrete action are deliberately ignored, or interpreted in a way to avoid their implementation. Needless to say, the silence of the Security Council concerning the apparent disregard of its resolutions on issues pertaining to international and regional peace and security, and attempts to question their validity, are dangerous and cannot constitute an accepted practice of the Council's working methods.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all Member States for their active participation in today's debate and for their valuable ideas and recommendations. They constitute essential food for thought and undoubtedly deserve careful consideration with a view to enhancing the transparency, effectiveness and interactivity of the Security Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.