



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

WORKING METHODS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

We welcome the holding of this open debate today and thank you for organizing it. We commend Portugal for its work as the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation. As ever, progress has proven difficult, but it has also been confirmed to us that leadership is crucial to bring about genuine improvements in the area of working methods. This debate is a good opportunity to assess progress and to better align the work of the Council with the expectations of the wider membership and discussions outside the Council.

Mr. President

The past years have seen some modest, while important improvements in the practice of the Council. Presidential Note 507, in its 2010 version, is a set of measures that the Council itself has agreed to take in order to better serve the interests of the wider membership as well as its own. More than two years later, however, full and consistent implementation of these measures remains elusive. The Working Group has continued its commendable efforts. At the same time, progress remains very limited and slow. A key issue for discussion at this time of the year is the more equal distribution of work between the Permanent and non-permanent

members of the Council, as it prepares for a new season, in a new composition. We hope that genuine consultations will lead to a good distribution of work in the subsidiary bodies. And we certainly believe that the work of the Council would benefit if non-permanent members were given a more active role in the drafting of resolutions and decisions. We also look forward to improvements in the format of the open debates of the Council. This could perhaps be a topic for the Working Group to take up early next year.

Mr. President

We value the work on the Working Group, but are also realistic about its scope and potential, focused mostly on the implementation of note 507. But we must also advance discussions beyond that. The point of reference for this discussion is to our mind draft resolution L.42, which was submitted to the General Assembly this spring by Costa Rica, Jordan, Singapore, Switzerland and ourselves. That resolution dealt with enhancing the accountability, transparency and effectiveness of the Security Council – the goals on which the Council needs to make tangible progress, as we all agreed at the 2005 World Summit. L.42 received, as is well known, considerable support in the membership of the United Nations, to the point that we are asked to this date why it was withdrawn instead of being put to a vote. While this is certainly not the place to discuss the reasons, we would like to recall the annex of that draft resolution, which should serve as a yardstick in our discussion on Council working methods. It continues to reflect the agenda that the Security Council should deal with according to the membership that it represents. This is true even for most of those who were not willing to vote in favor of L.42, as they advanced reasons of procedure rather than substance to explain their position. If the Security Council is serious in its resolve to advance its working methods, it has now been given a detailed menu to do so.

Mr. President

Of particular relevance is the work of the Council in the area of accountability. Even two decades after the establishment of the first ad hoc tribunal it often seems that the Council finds

itself in uncharted territory in this respect. At the same time, the accountability needs and the relevant pressure on the Council are increasing – as is illustrated in connection with the widespread and systematic crimes committed against the civilian population in Syria. There is a clear need for the Council to engage, with the rest of the membership, in an in-depth and comprehensive discussion of the role that the Council can play in this respect. The open debate that Guatemala has organized on this topic in October was a significant step, while just a first one. We have organized a workshop with the International Peace Institute on the same topic earlier this month and hope that other States, members of the Council or otherwise, will show an active interest in this important subject. A substantial part of this discussion, while by far not all of it, will naturally revolve around the International Criminal Court, given the competencies given to the Council under the Rome Statute. As a first small step in this direction, we believe that a subsidiary body – perhaps preferably an existing one – should be designated as the place where relevant topics can be discussed, including notifications from the Court. To this end, my delegation, together with the delegations from Costa Rica and Jordan, has submitted a letter to you, asking that the Council take such a step, as a concrete follow-up to the open debate in October.

Mr. President

The use of the veto is a central aspect of the way in which the Council carries out its work – or, more frequently, fails to do so. The past year has given ample evidence to this effect. The veto as such is part and parcel of the Charter of the United Nations which we all have ratified. But it is essential that it not be used contrary to the very purposes and principles of the organization, and that a minimum of accountability is provided in this respect. We believe that a code of conduct regarding the use of the veto would be useful, with a clear emphasis on its use in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We encourage the Council and in particular its permanent members to commence this discussion.

I thank you.