



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

NEW YORK, 6 JUNE 2019
SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

WORKING METHODS

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President

We appreciate your leadership on the topic under discussion today. Efforts to make the Security Council more inclusive, transparent and accountable are of essential importance and need to be discussed with the wider membership. Progress on this file has been steady, while uneven – and certainly slow. The most difficult aspect, however, remains the inconsistent application of working methods issues that the Council itself has agreed on over the last years. We look forward to further improvements on implementation of these working methods. In this respect, it is certainly helpful that the elected members of the Council work in closer coordination, both inside the Council, but also with partners outside, such as the ACT group, of which we are a member.

The Security Council was not designed as a democratic body, as the Permanent Members have the competence to singlehandedly block majority decisions. For this reason, we expect the elected members to play a dynamic and independent role on the Council. More precisely, our expectation in electing them is that they fully and effectively contribute to the work of the Council – after all they are the only ones directly accountable to the membership. For Liechtenstein, subscribing to the Code of Conduct on mass atrocities developed by the ACT group is a minimum standard for Council membership and a precondition

for our support in Council elections. But, we also believe that some of the practice that has evolved in the recent history of the Council is detrimental to an active role of the elected members. We therefore favor agreements under which elected members can serve as penholders on resolutions submitted to the Council's consideration. We welcome in particular the suggestion to have the delegation chairing the Sanctions Committee on a specific country situation has a joint leadership function with the traditional penholder in drafting resolutions. More than anything else this seems to be more an issue of quality management and common sense. In addition, we would like to see chairmanships of subsidiary bodies more equitably distributed in the Council's membership. Having Permanent Members taking on their share of these tasks is a good way to have a healthier working relationship in the Council's membership.

Mr. President

We have for many years paid particular attention to the work of the Council on sanctions, rooted in our commitment to the rule of law and the requirements of due process. The establishment of the office of an Ombudsperson in 2009 was an important – and an overdue – step, given the legal challenges in the courts of various Member States. The work of the Ombudsperson has been very effective and hardly controversial – against the expectations of many. And yet, the Council denies the office the appropriate institutional arrangements and still labors with the obvious next step that is necessary: to extend the mandate of the Ombudsperson to the remaining Sanctions regimes. We see no good reason for not taking this decision and hope that the Council will respond to the call of the wider membership in this respect expeditiously.

Mr. President,

We participate actively and regularly in the wrap-up sessions whenever they are organized at the end of a Presidency. These are important opportunities for us to voice our opinions and to ask questions – and valuable opportunities for the Council to hear from us, your constituency. We look forward to seeing further improvements in the format of these meetings. And, we hope that they will be institutionalized to take place at the end of every month. The format of open debates – such as the one we are having just now – is also much talked about. The most relevant point for us is having an open debate organized in such a way that it can help make the decision-making process among Council members more inclusive

and thus more legitimate. The easiest way of doing this is separating the debate from the moment of adoption of a decision - this, as we understand, is the case today. We thank you for leading by example.

Mr. President,

The mandate of the Security Council deals with the core original task of the United Nations. The effectiveness of the organization as a whole therefore depends on the manner in which the Council does its work. Deep political divisions among the Permanent Members, pressure to reduce funding for necessary peacekeeping operations and increasing political disengagement are therefore alarming signals. As members of this organization who are politically invested in multilateralism, we cannot just sit at the sideline and occasionally voice our frustration. We have to claim ownership and, where possible, step in through action in the General Assembly when the Council fails in its duties. The creation of the IIMM accountability mechanism for Syria in the General Assembly illustrates that this can be done – and can be done very effectively. The ultimate expression of the Council’s inability to operate is when its decisions are blocked by the veto – as has happened fifteen times in the last five years. We are therefore of the view that the General Assembly should be convened automatically every time a veto is cast. This should be done without prejudice to a possible outcome of such a discussion – Member States of course would have the option to put forward proposals, but there is no need for automaticity. We see important value added and significant improvement in the area of accountability if a discussion on a vetoed decision takes place with the entire membership.

Thank you.