

Security Council Open Debate on Working Methods, 28 June 2022

Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) statement

Delivered by Ambassador Pascale Baeriswyl,
Permanent Representative of Switzerland on behalf of 26 ACT members

Mr. President,

1. I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of **26 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group (ACT)**: Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Slovenia, Sweden, Uruguay, and my own country, Switzerland.
2. The ACT group remains convinced of the need to **consolidate the strengths of Security Council working methods, address fundamental flaws, and build on innovations made**. We commend the efforts deployed by Albania in its capacity as Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions (IWG). We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this debate and thank the briefers for their contributions.
3. The Security Council's ability to deliver on its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security is put to the test by disrespect of the UN Charter and lack of compliance with international law. Prompt and decisive action by the Security Council is needed to prevent and respond to the devastating consequences of armed conflict for civilians across the globe. By adopting resolution 76/262, the General Assembly underscored the Council's duty to apply the UN Charter to its best effect to prevent and resolve conflict. This new accountability mechanism mobilizes the broader UN membership whenever the Council is unable to fulfil its duties because of the use of the veto by a permanent member. We welcome the timely transmission of a Special Report by the Council to the General Assembly in line with Article 24 of the Charter in the first application of this resolution, and if the veto is used in future.

Mr. President,

4. The ACT group would like to highlight three areas to **strengthen Council working methods**.

5. **First, we call for a number of innovations to be continued and institutionalised.** We recognize the contribution made by elected members to strengthen Council working methods. The ACT group hopes to see the comprehensive digital *Programme of Work* promoted by Norway and others, which made the Council's work more accessible for the wider UN membership, become a permanent feature. Shared thematic commitments on *Women, Peace and Security*, which build on the initiative by Ireland, Kenya and Mexico and joined by a growing number of presidencies have made a tangible contribution to implementation across the Council's agenda. Letters on working methods commitments by successive presidencies offer a way to promote agility and institutionalise commitments toward greater effectiveness and transparency. We encourage the continued exploration and use of virtual briefings, including databased presentations, visualization and/or augmented reality. We reiterate our call to continue the codification of best practices adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a view to future-proofing the Council against the risks of other crises or major disruptions.

6. **Second, we underline the need for inclusivity, which is critical for the Council's effectiveness.** The ACT group welcomes the return to in-person participation by the wider membership in Council meetings, and remains ready to engage with Council members in exploring creative ways to ensure that open debates are both effective and inclusive. We hope also that the Council will return to a more inclusive approach on the acceptance of Rule 37 requests. The possibility for briefers, including civil society representatives, to brief the Council through VTC is positive. Member states directly affected by Council decisions should be able to engage timely and through adequate channels. We commend the regular holding of interactive sessions by the presidency to discuss priorities and to wrap-up the month by reflecting on achievements and challenges with the wider membership. Visiting missions by the Council are an important means to gather the views of a broad range of stakeholders and to gain first-hand understanding of dynamics on the ground. We encourage the Council to continue this practice and to debrief the wider membership upon return. We reiterate our call to the Council to make better use of the Annual Report to provide a more complete, substantive and analytical account of its work to the General Assembly.

7. **Third, we urge Council members to use all available formats to forge consensus and to enable action in situations of which the Council is seized as well as in response to emerging threats.** Recalling that members of the United Nations have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the ACT Group calls upon the members of the Council to fulfill all obligations to enable the Council to discharge its responsibilities, to uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and to act in the collective interests of maintaining international peace and security. We recall that Article 27 limits the

participation of members who are directly involved in a dispute in decisions relating to the peaceful settlement thereof. We deem it crucial to continue investing in creative ways to restore and expand space for dialogue among Council members. We call on all member states to join the ACT Code of Conduct and to support Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Mr. President,

8. Accountability, coherence and transparency are mutually reinforcing principles that must continue to guide improvements in the working methods of the Security Council. The ACT group is committed to do its part and to actively contribute and support any initiative towards this end.

I thank you.