

SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING METHODS

19 July 2016

INDIA STATEMENT

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Mr. President,

I take the floor with a sense of unease. It is an unease that stems from the old saying 'Expectation is the mother of all frustration'. Many of us regularly articulate suggestions for enhancing transparency, effectiveness and inclusivity in the work of the Council. We do so as we harbor some expectations from this august body. Yet, these suggestions, supported by many, remain largely unimplemented. Notwithstanding persistent efforts, progress on Working methods of the Council sadly is best measured not by what has been achieved but how much more remains to be fulfilled.

2. Today, I limit my focus to just two aspects that are always wished for but never implemented.

3. First, is the need for change of the processes followed in the subterranean universe of the Council's subsidiary bodies. The subterranean universe I refer to consists of 26 sanctions regimes acting on behalf of the Council. On an average, they cumulatively take 1000 decisions a year. However, rare is the occasion, when the Chair of any of these bodies briefs Member States or the media about their proceedings after their meetings.

4. Mr. President, in your statement it was mentioned, that you are conducting a press stakeout after every session of informal consultations. You also referred to the holding of informal wrap-up briefing sessions which are now becoming a practice. We compliment you on these efforts. May I ask, why do these efforts at transparency not extend to the subterranean universe, where more decisions are taken than in formal meetings or informal consultations? Why is it that we are blandly informed of positive decisions of this subterranean universe and never told about negative decisions when proposals are not acceded to?

5. Mr. President, when a Council resolution is voted upon all of us know who votes for what and Member States explain their positions. However, in the subterranean world of subsidiary bodies there is no explanation given. No one says what is the rationale for acceptance. Furthermore, a rejection does not even surface in the public space. No one indicates who specifically is not supporting a request. Indeed, proposals that can't make it are buried without public acknowledgement that they were ever considered.

6. In the subterranean universe, all decisions are required to be taken by unanimity, a practice that is not in vogue in the Council itself. While the trend now is to consider means to curtail the use of the veto in the Council's own work and many here support such efforts. However, in the subterranean universe all Council Members have extended vetoes to themselves as members of Sanctions Committees.

7. In the subterranean universe of subsidiary bodies, the adoption of principles of anonymity and unanimity has absolved individual members of accountability. Taking their cue from the membership of these bodies, other Member States too perhaps have not been implementing many of the decisions taken by these bodies. A look at the implementation reports from the Member States available on the web site of the Sanctions Committees indicates how outdated they are; in most cases they are of 2003 vintage.

8. Mr. President, we welcome the Council's adoption, today, of a new procedure for selection of the Chairs of subsidiary bodies. We hope it is a harbinger of greater change in the subterranean universe in its totality.

9. Mr. President, Let me detail another aspect. This relates to the lack of institutionalized interaction and consultation between the Council and Troop and Police Contributing Countries. This is a staple issue since the Brahimi Report of 2000. Most recently, on 31 December 2015 the Council adopted presidential statement S/PRST/2015/26. In that the Council noted, that the lack of effective dialogue among the Council, Secretariat and Troop Contributing Countries had generated frustration on all sides and undermined mandate implementation. Yet, let us look at the recent example of developments concerning the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan in the six month period. There has been talk and suggestions about increasing the number of troops; of possible expansion of mandate; deployment of a rapid action brigade; measures for protection of civilians; and calls for an arms embargo. At no stage have there been efforts at institutionalized consultations with TCCs on any of these.

10. Consultations amongst Council, Secretariat and Troop Contributing Countries remains an improvement which has been wished in various fora by many but remains to be implemented years after its necessity has been accepted. May I ask Mr. President when will its time come?

11. Mr. President, The two areas mentioned by delegation exemplify the chasm that exists between the Council's working methods and the general membership's wishes for a comprehensive structural-functional reform. India is committed to the pursuit of that quest for far-reaching reform to make the Council fit for purpose for the 21st century.

Thank you.