

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 31 December 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

As you are aware, I had the honour to convene and chair an Arria-formula meeting entitled “Enhancing and widening interaction and dialogue between the Security Council and other United Nations Member States, as part of the implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document”, which was held on 13 December 2007.

The meeting was designed to facilitate an exchange of views related to the efforts to enhance the efficiency, openness and transparency of the work of the Council, as well as its dialogue and interaction with non-Council members.

The invited speakers were:

- Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (2002-2007) and former Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations (1996-2001)
- Ambassador Colin Keating, Executive Director of Security Council Report and former Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations (1993-1996)
- Ambassador Peter Maurer, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations

I believe the meeting was very interesting and useful. Please find attached a summary and recommendations of the meeting, which were prepared under my responsibility.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated among the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Peter **Burian**  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 31 December 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

**Enhancing and widening interaction and dialogue between the Security Council and other United Nations Member States, as part of the implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document**

**Arria-formula meeting convened by the delegation of Slovakia**

**13 December 2007**

**Summary and recommendations**

1. The Arria-formula meeting was convened by Ambassador Peter Burian, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations. Three panellists were invited to the meeting to present their opinions on the subject of the discussion: Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and former Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations (1996-2001); Ambassador Colin Keating, Executive Director of Security Council Report and former Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations (1993-1996); and Ambassador Peter Maurer, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations. The meeting was attended by the members of the Security Council, the five newly elected non-permanent members of the Council for 2008-2009, as well as representatives of seven other Member States invited to take part in the meeting: Finland, Japan, Jordan, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Singapore and Switzerland. As observers, representatives of the Secretariat and Security Council Report, which is an independent not-for-profit organization affiliated with Columbia University, also took part in the meeting. The meeting was designed to facilitate an exchange of views related to the efforts to enhance the efficiency, openness and transparency of the work of the Council, as well as dialogue and interaction with non-Council members.

2. Participants welcomed the initiative to organize the meeting as an innovative opportunity to discuss this important topic. While welcoming the progress that the Council achieved to date regarding its working modalities and transparency procedures, the participants drew attention to a number of issues related to Council operating processes that could further enhance the openness and transparency of the Council, in particular in the context of interaction and dialogue between the Security Council and other Member States. It was also noted that these efforts remain a work in progress.

3. The following suggestions and recommendations for increasing the involvement of States not members of the Council were generated during the meeting:

### **Security Council internal issues**

- Better and more frequent use of Arria-formula meetings would be useful.
- Systematic implementation of the measures contained in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2006/507) should be undertaken.
- The Council could assess the implementation of its decisions by establishing “lessons learned” groups.
- Establishing a position of spokesperson for the Security Council was suggested.

### **Role of the Council President**

- The rotating presidency of the Council has a major responsibility towards promoting openness and transparency.
- As a general rule, briefings should be given by the President.
- Communiqués issued by the President could be more substantive and informative.

### **Interaction with non-Council members and the General Assembly**

- Transparency and communication between the Council and the broader United Nations membership was highlighted as a key element. Enhancing and widening interaction and dialogue between the Council and other Member States is a matter not only of openness and transparency, but also of effectiveness.
- Greater involvement of non-members in the thematic issues debated by the Council, especially when there are decisions adopted following such debates.
- Consistent with Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council could submit special subject-oriented reports to the General Assembly on matters of importance to all Member States (e.g. sanctions and peacekeeping).
- There could be greater use of information technology in enhancing the interaction between the Council and non-members.
- The annual report of the Council to the General Assembly should be made more substantial and analytical. The Council could hold an interactive discussion with the General Assembly on the annual report.
- Monthly reports of the Council to the General Assembly could be instituted on the basis, for instance, of a monthly assessment of each outgoing presidency.
- Better access of the wider membership to the Council field missions and their conclusions was suggested.

### **Countries directly affected by Council action and troop-contributing countries**

- Regular consultations between members and non-members could be established as a standard procedure of the Council. Countries should be given the opportunity to participate in issues that are of their national interest. The Council should enhance cooperation with actors involved or directly affected

through an informal approach on issues concerning the mandate of Council missions. The Security Council should begin on a case-by-case basis and develop this practice over time. Informal and private meetings and use of subsidiary bodies to effectuate such a new formula would be preferable.

- The Council could include appropriate language in resolutions extending or ending the mandate of current Council missions, promoting wider dialogue with countries directly concerned.
- Forming Core Groups, Groups of Friends or Contact Groups could be promoted to enhance involvement of directly affected countries into the Council's decision-making processes.
- The Council should revitalize and enhance its consultations with troop-contributing countries. Special Representatives of the Secretary-General should be encouraged to participate in the meetings with troop-contributing countries and make substantive presentations. Troop-contributing country meetings should be organized at an early stage (not only on the day of Security Council consultations or public meetings). They should focus on policy choices by the Council, in addition to factual briefings.

#### **Regional and other groups**

- Institutional regional groups could enhance their interest and involvement in the work of the Council.
- Holding of informal meetings of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions with interested Member States on a number of relevant issues was encouraged.

#### **Secretariat**

- Institutional involvement of the Secretariat, and particularly the Secretary-General, bringing long-term strategy into the process may contribute to enhancing interaction and dialogue between the Council and other bodies, especially the General Assembly.
- A stronger role for the Secretariat in implementing the measures contained in document S/2006/507 was suggested.
- Briefings by the Secretary-General and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General should in general be open.

#### **Economic and Social Council**

- An enhanced dialogue between the Council and the Economic and Social Council would be beneficial for both bodies.

#### **Interaction more broadly within the United Nations system**

- There could be frequent, more substantive "exchanges of views" between the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as a standard operating procedure.