



Security Council

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Letter dated 14 February 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to send you the report of the sixteenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council, which was held on 29 and 30 November 2018 at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, New York (see annex). The final report has been compiled in accordance with the Chatham House Rule under the sole responsibility of the Permanent Mission of Finland.

On the basis of the very positive feedback that we have received from the participants each year, the Government of Finland remains committed to sponsoring the workshop as an annual event. The Government of Finland hopes that the report will contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the work of the Council.

I should be grateful, accordingly, if this report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kai **Sauer**
Ambassador

Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 14 February 2019 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

“Hitting the ground running”: sixteenth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council, held on 29 and 30 November 2018 at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, New York

The Government of Finland, in collaboration with the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University and the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, convened the sixteenth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council on 29 and 30 November 2018.

For 16 consecutive years, the annual workshops have provided the incoming and continuing members of the Security Council with two critical opportunities. One is for newly elected members to familiarize themselves with the practices, procedures and working methods of the Council so that they are fully prepared to “hit the ground running” when their terms on the Council commence the following January. This purpose has been consistently respected over the years. The second complementary opportunity, which has become increasingly appreciated over time, is to offer current, as well as incoming, members dedicated time and space to reflect and compare views on the work of the Council and how its functioning might be enhanced. From the outset, the exchanges have been held under the Chatham House rule of non-attribution to encourage candid and searching discussions. Consistent with that rule, the only speakers identified in the present report are those at the opening dinner. As in past years, the report was prepared by Professor Edward C. Luck of the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University.

The opening dinner, on 29 November, featured welcoming remarks by the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, Kai Sauer; a keynote address by Michelle Bachelet, speaking in her personal capacity; and closing remarks by the President of the Security Council and Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Ma Zhaoxu.

On 30 November, the full-day programme consisted of three round-table discussions among all participants on the following themes:

- (a) State of the Security Council 2018: taking stock and looking ahead (session I);
- (b) Working methods and subsidiary bodies (session II);
- (c) Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2018 (session III).

Opening dinner

In her personal remarks, Ms. Bachelet reflected on the ways in which the insights she had gained as a physician and defence minister had helped to prepare her for her later work on the international stage, including her current responsibilities as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. She said that principles of justice, memory and human rights could strengthen institutions and make them more resilient in times of stress. It was important to find better ways of engaging civil society, in addition to Governments. Inclusive and sustainable development could contribute to the pursuit of peace and security. It would be short-sighted to dismiss

the effects of climate change on a host of phenomena that could affect the security of peoples and Governments.

Ms. Bachelet cautioned that there was no single “recipe” that would work for all countries or situations. Processes of change varied from place to place, and it should be recognized that transformations took time to mature. Sometimes physicians had to act quickly and decisively, but at other times they should be more deliberative in assessing symptoms and getting the diagnosis right in a particular case. That could be true for the Council as well.

In her experience, dialogue was essential to achieving reconciliation, which was often possible even in quite difficult circumstances. Respect for international law and multilateral institutions needed to be reasserted, as they were key to maintaining international peace and security. She stressed that it was essential to take into account the fundamental sources of violence and conflict, including assaults on basic human rights, when trying to build sustainable peace and security.

The following morning, at the opening of the workshop’s three round-table discussions, introductory comments were made by the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Hasmik Egian, and by Mr. Luck of the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University.

Session I

State of the Security Council 2018: taking stock and looking ahead

Moderator

Ambassador Karen Pierce

Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Commentators

Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra

Permanent Representative of Peru

Ambassador Jonathan Cohen

Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America

Assessment of the performance of the Council in 2018

A participant lamented that there was a prevailing image of the Security Council as an organ that was becoming less effective and less influential over time. That perception was harming the Council’s reputation, thus underscoring the need to seek real consensus in 2019. Part of the problem, noted another speaker, was the high expectations that everyone had for the Council. Both the public and Member States, for instance, expected it to be more effective in dealing with the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. Nevertheless, it was an honour to participate in the work of the Council and to have a seat at the table. Another speaker said that it was helpful to look for the positive, as there was always room for informal exchanges that might help to move even difficult issues forward.

Expectations and assessments, noted a discussant, depended on assumptions about what sort of roles the Council ought to play. Should it act as an insurance manager, focused on reducing risks to the company? Should it serve chiefly as a firefighter, seeking to put out the flames of ongoing blazes? Should it assume the role of an ambulance chaser, searching for problems to be addressed? Or should it serve as a builder and contractor, seeking to create stronger countries and Governments? It would be helpful for the members to reflect on what roles the Council should

emphasize in 2019 and beyond. In response, a participant suggested that the Council needed to be both a fire inspector, emphasizing prevention to keep fires from starting in the first place, and a firefighter when they did occur. The Council's preventive role could be reinforced through attention to thematic and cross-cutting concerns, such as children and armed conflict, women, peace and security, atrocity prevention, climate change and security.

On the positive side of the balance sheet, a speaker pointed to the Council's very good work in 2018 on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and South Sudan, and on maintaining unity in dealing with Myanmar and Yemen. Another discussant said that unity within the Council had opened up new diplomatic paths for dealing with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and had helped to sustain the peace process in Colombia. There had also been progress in improving relations among Eritrea, Ethiopia and Djibouti. It had been possible to change the nature of the Council's engagement with Liberia to one stressing peacebuilding and sustaining the peace that had finally been achieved there. There had been some positive movement in Yemen, although much would depend on the results achieved in the forthcoming meetings in Sweden. There had been only modest progress in addressing the Sahel, Mali and Libya. Generally, it had been possible to maintain unity in the Council's approach to countering terrorism, but there were some differences in emphasis regarding the place of human rights in such efforts. The role of organized crime, including drug cartels in Latin America, in aiding and abetting terrorism should receive more attention in 2019.

A discussant said that there had been a lot of good news coming from Africa, including the lifting of sanctions against Eritrea, achieved with leadership from Ethiopia; the possibility of progress in the Democratic Republic of the Congo after the elections forthcoming in December; the prospect of sustained peace in Guinea-Bissau, which might allow sanctions to be eased; and further steps towards implementing the 2017 Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. The Security Council should pay close attention to the stated priorities of the African Union and work to enhance collaboration with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in 2019. A second speaker agreed that there had been encouraging developments in the Horn of Africa, including positive steps in Ethiopia and some that the Council had helped to induce in South Sudan. The Council should do its best to support regional initiatives, and members should ensure that their permanent representatives attended the sessions of the Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa in 2019.

According to an interlocutor, the Security Council had been fulfilling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa, in Latin America, with its support of the peace process in Colombia, and in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It was essential, however, to safeguard the stature of the Council by fully and faithfully implementing its decisions. In the view of another speaker, one of the key achievements of the year had been resolution [2401 \(2018\)](#), in which the Council had called for a 30-day ceasefire in the Syrian Arab Republic. The adoption of the resolution had been made possible by, in part, the unified stance of the 10 elected members. A third discussant said that the dialogue with the Secretary-General at the retreat in Sweden had been quite inspiring and had included a useful discussion of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On a strategic level, noted a participant, some remarkable achievements had been accomplished in 2018. Most of the progress, however, had been made away from the Security Council Chamber, in consultations and other informal formats. A united Council had been able to provide valuable support for the peace process and the consolidation of peace in Colombia. In South Sudan, the new agreement was still fragile, but strong messages to the parties and Council sanctions had helped to support

it. It had been possible, moreover, to accomplish quite a bit in 2018 even when the Council was not always united. This had been true in the case of Yemen, where the Council had backed the mediation efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, including the forthcoming talks in Sweden.

On the negative side of the ledger, a speaker commented that, at best, the Council's record in 2018 had been mixed. The most shocking failures had come in humanitarian affairs. Yemen was a humanitarian disaster, and the same could be said about the Syrian Arab Republic and Myanmar. The public had seen those results and was questioning the Council's legitimacy. Ongoing conflicts had resulted in huge numbers of refugees and internally displaced people, including in Latin America. Such humanitarian disasters reflected unresolved political problems that Council members simply did not know how to handle. In trying to address the Palestinian issue and developments in Gaza, mistrust remained an enormous obstacle. A second discussant concurred that the series of humanitarian catastrophes had brought the legitimacy of the Council into question. The Syrian Arab Republic, Myanmar and Yemen, as well as Israel and Palestine, were places where the members of the Council had failed to do their job. In the view of a third interlocutor, persistent structural problems had made it very hard to deal with the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, but it would be unfair and "too fashionable" to allow the impasse in that country to define the work of the Council overall in 2018.

According to a participant, any assessment of the Council's effectiveness should take into account all of the past issues, such as those in the Middle East, that it had failed to resolve. Seen from that perspective, it was understandable that people questioned the Council's credibility. In considering the balance of achievements and challenges, commented another speaker, one should be realistic about the extent to which perceptions of the Council's effectiveness were shaped by highly visible failures in places such as the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. There was a need to be honest about the way in which the Council's credibility was gauged by others.

A speaker said that although an agreement had been signed in South Sudan, nothing fundamental had been resolved. On Haiti, suggested a second speaker, the Council had good intentions but the results had been disappointing. There were deep problems of governance there, and members of the Council should open a searching dialogue with Haitians and begin to think outside the box about the country's future path. According to a third participant, there had been problems in the Secretariat as well as in the Council. Too often, the Secretariat was not well structured to implement Council resolutions, as there sometimes seemed to be too much bureaucracy and too little planning.

At times, contended a discussant, a permanent member of the Council had a strong political interest in the situation at hand and frustrated progress in finding a peaceful solution. Another speaker commented that there had been too much outsourcing of Council mandates to coalitions of the willing, which was equivalent to outsourcing responsibility and leaving it to others to resolve complex situations. That had been a problem in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel and Palestine, Yemen and the Syrian Arab Republic. In some of those situations, there had been a dangerous influx of foreign fighters. Another participant responded that, in the case of Afghanistan, the operation had been led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and had been more akin to one headed by the African Union than to a coalition of the willing. Another discussant agreed, asserting that there was no "us" or "them" in the Council.

Challenges ahead

It was suggested that in 2019 the Security Council would have many of the same issues before it as in 2018. The focus should be on finding solutions that worked.

There was a need to look at the corruption nexus and at ways to refine performance standards for peacekeeping operations. In the light of the effects of refugee flows on neighbouring countries, the Council should address the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Nicaragua in 2019. There were real implications for international peace and security. The Syrian Arab Republic and Gaza would continue to matter as well. Another participant, pointing out that most of the issues before the Council were internal conflicts – such as South Sudan, Yemen, the Central African Republic, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic – said that the Council should give fresh thought to how it defined international peace and security. It was a matter more of the potential destructiveness of the conflict than of sovereignty. According to a third speaker, there were so many problems in the world that careful thought would need to be given to where the Council could make a real difference in 2019.

For one discussant, the priorities of the Council in 2019 should be Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Sahel, as well as developing an integrated strategy for peacekeeping and a more effective approach to conflict prevention. Concept papers should be translated into action and the Council should make better use of all resources available to carry out its work. A second speaker agreed that Yemen should be a priority for 2019, and added that the Council, in its role of trying to bring countries together, should look for opportunities to bridge the gap between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Another participant suggested that members of the Council should work in 2019 to unite on a common approach to the challenges ahead.

An interlocutor identified two related areas for Council priorities in 2019: humanitarian and protection issues and engendering greater respect for international law. More could be done to fulfil the Council's commitment to the protection of civilians. More thought should be given to people and their lives in places such as the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Respect for international norms, including human rights and international humanitarian law, was at a low point. Efforts in those areas could complement support for the reform package being proposed by the Secretary-General relating to peacekeeping, peacebuilding and political affairs. A second speaker identified the growing role of non-State armed groups and new forms of terrorism as pressing priorities for the year ahead. A third discussant suggested that the Council should look at cyberterrorism too.

It was suggested that peacekeeping was an area in which the Council could make a real difference in 2019, building on the progress achieved in 2018. Peacekeeping was a core activity of the Council on which its members were usually united. However, another speaker said that there often was a disconnect between those authorizing a mission and those carrying it out. The trip to the People's Republic of China had been encouraging in terms of the country's expanding interest in peacekeeping, but in general the permanent members needed to be more engaged in the implementation of peacekeeping missions. There had not been sufficient follow-up to either the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations ([A/55/305-S/2000/809](#)) or the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)), despite the good ideas contained therein. Members needed to see peacekeeping as a key tool for carrying out the Council's work and not just as a financial matter. Another discussant responded that some members were understandably concerned about efficiency given the substantial costs involved, and the original speaker concurred that fairer distribution of costs among the permanent members was needed. A third interlocutor said that the current system, based on the capacity to pay, was equitable.

According to a discussant, contributions to peacekeeping were not restricted to financing; there could be real human costs as well. Troop-contributing countries often suffered casualties and they needed to be given a larger place in consultations about possible new missions and mandates. Another speaker agreed that there was a need

to find better ways of giving troop-contributing countries a voice in shaping mandates. More thought should be given, commented a third discussant, to whether an intervention would ultimately be helpful or harmful.

A speaker asked on what basis and at what point the Council should decide to cease its involvement in a particular country. The same speaker wondered whether it was like leaving an intensive care unit. What was the criterion, for instance, in Liberia? The same question could be asked about United Nations development programmes, responded another interlocutor. In any case, commented a third speaker, peacekeeping interventions should not be designed to teach countries how to behave, which would seem too much like colonialism. Clearly, noted another discussant, the Council should devote more attention to the purposes of peacekeeping missions in the future.

The veto power created a paradox, in the view of a participant. It caused great difficulties in responding to some situations, such as in the Syrian Arab Republic, but it had also permitted the longevity of the Council. The efforts of France and Mexico to encourage restraint in the use of the veto offered interesting possibilities, even if it required further development. A second interlocutor also recognized that paradox, noting that the veto was key to the Council's historical sustainability but was also an increasingly dysfunctional feature of Council decision-making. By calling for restraint in how the veto was used, the French-Mexican proposal sought to lessen the dysfunctional aspects of the veto. In the view of a third discussant, the use of the veto made a member's willingness to block Council action highly visible, forcing them to take full responsibility for the consequences of their decision. A fourth participant agreed with the others regarding the implications of employing the veto and regretted that it had been used so often recently to undermine respect for international humanitarian law. In the future, members should do their best to make sure that provisions relating to respect for international humanitarian law were included in Council outcomes.

A speaker noted that, during the general debate in the General Assembly, leaders had spoken of the value of multilateralism, which was not antithetical to the pursuit of national interests. Unity was terrific, commented a discussant, but the Council's mandate under the Charter of the United Nations was to maintain international peace and security, not to seek unity at all costs. What was needed was to look for ways to advance international peace and security even when Council members were not united. In practice, it had been possible to come together to identify opportunities to make progress in some areas, even when there were glaring differences in others. The Council had done best when it had focused on solving problems, rather than just commenting on them. The Council's work was the essence of multilateralism and it was essential that the members make the Council function as well as possible. Members needed to do a better job of listening and talking to one another, not past each other.

A participant noted that sometimes those who were out of step were actually correct and that the Council should not be reluctant to hear dissenting voices. There had tended to be too much speaking and finger pointing in the Council and too little effort to listen to the views of all. There needed to be a more concerted effort to look for solutions to difficult problems. Perhaps, as some had said, the ultimate goal was not to reach consensus, but the Preamble to the Charter spoke of the need "to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security". That entailed listening to everybody. The Council had accomplished real achievements, but it was disappointing that there was often not a greater effort to achieve unity.

"United we stand, divided we fall", commented an interlocutor. The Council had had a great impact when it was united, but it had achieved much less when it was

divided, noted another. Consensus decision-making did not have to be based on the lowest common denominator, as the European Union had demonstrated. According to a third participant, challenges to decision-making in the Council had persisted for many years. There was a need to work towards consensus and to place a priority on maintaining dialogue. From the perspective of another interlocutor, there was an atmosphere of mistrust in the Council, which had been compounded by a tendency to speak to the press and to parliaments rather than to one other. That had sometimes compelled delegations to say no to draft resolutions before the members had had a chance to reach an agreement. Sometimes it would be better to slow down the process and to allow time to resolve differences, instead of rushing to produce outcomes.

According to a speaker, penholders needed to make a greater effort to discuss drafts with the Council as a whole. In the case of the Syrian Arab Republic, there could have been more dialogue before voting on some draft resolutions. With regard to Haiti, there had been insufficient discussion before the Mission was terminated. In the case of a draft resolution on the Central African Republic, not all delegations had seen the draft before voting and there had been a premature resort to public diplomacy. Generally, there was a need for more give and take, which was the essence of diplomacy. A discussant responded that there was room for unity in the Council on the situation in the Central African Republic and that the penholder had taken the time to listen to all positions within the Council and had taken them into account in order to produce a fair, balanced and reasonable outcome.

In general, commented a speaker, there was a need for greater patience in Council deliberations, rather than rushing to make decisions. Often, more consultations were required to find a balanced position. The Council was designed to provide space for disagreements and to find ways to work them out. According to another discussant, there were trust deficits in the Council that needed to be overcome in order to achieve real progress and to permit preventive diplomacy to succeed in a number of places. The Council could proceed step-by-step on many issues, but it had to do so in a united manner.

It was anticipated and understandable that there would be debates within the Council on many matters, noted a participant, but they should not prevent the members from finding a united approach to solving problems. The Council should seek to present to others an image of a body that was searching for solutions and solidarity among its members. The speaker agreed with what others had said about listening, solidarity and unity. The members should try to work by consensus. It was incumbent on members of the Council and all States Members of the United Nations to work to implement Council decisions. Sometimes Council members should act in support of initiatives undertaken by others, such as in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and parts of Africa.

Sharpening tools

In terms of meeting formats, a speaker called for a better balance between open meetings and consultations. At one point, the speaker had favoured greater openness, but things had gone too far in that direction. A second participant commented that, with the increase in the number of open meetings, the emphasis had shifted from seeking peaceful settlement to public diplomacy, and to speaking to the press and public opinion. The members should not give up on multilateral approaches to problem solving, added a third interlocutor, but with so many public meetings, the Council had turned to debating rather than to seeking consensus and agreement. More consultations were needed, so as to strike a better balance between private consultations and public debate. In the view of another discussant, although there was inevitable overlap between open meetings in the Security Council Chamber and consultations, both were necessary because they served distinct functions. Discussion

was less candid in public settings, but for the consideration of matters such as sanctions that had implications for all Member States, wider participation was needed. There had been a time when sessions in the consultation room went on beyond midnight. In that regard, suggested another participant, it would be helpful to have permanent representatives more directly involved and visible in more aspects of the Council's work.

An interlocutor called for greater emphasis in the work of the Council on quiet diplomacy, mediation and support for the Secretary-General's prevention efforts. More emphasis on preventive diplomacy, added a second speaker, was the key to the future. To assist the Secretary-General's preventive diplomacy efforts, the members of the Council should strive to overcome their differences. Whether in Yemen or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Council was more effective when members tried to find a common denominator. According to a third discussant, the incoming members could leave their mark on peaceful resolution and preventive diplomacy by sharpening the tools of Chapter VI and "Chapter six and a half" of the Charter. Another participant noted that the Charter called on the Council to maintain, not restore, international peace and security. Therefore, the emphasis should be on acting before peace was broken and on preventing internal conflicts from becoming international ones.

The Council had a wide range of tools at its disposal, noted a discussant, but the most important ones involved peaceful means of conflict resolution. Among those tools were mediation, negotiation and dialogue. When mediation and conflict resolution failed, commented a second speaker, it was easy to blame the Council and especially its permanent members, but there were often other factors at play, including, at times, the structural dysfunction in the Secretariat. According to another participant, one of the ways in which the Council could make a difference was by letting the parties know that the Council was paying attention. Messaging and selective use of the media could be helpful, but it was important not to overuse the Council's megaphone. Those tools should not be utilized at the expense of solving the problems on the ground.

Everyone believed in conflict prevention, observed a participant, but it often seemed that the Council lacked effective tools for prevention. The Secretary-General had made an excellent start in setting out his ideas in that regard, although more thought needed to be devoted to what the Council could do in terms of mediation and conflict prevention. Could better use be made, for instance, of the provisions of Articles 34 and 99 of the Charter? On Article 99, responded a discussant, the Secretary-General and the Council had developed a very good relationship. However, more could be done to support the Secretary-General's efforts at mediation and prevention, bearing in mind that the work was carried out by his special advisers, representatives and envoys. Nevertheless, there were times when it might be helpful for individual members of the Council to stand by individual special advisers, representatives and envoys to show support and add legitimacy. In terms of Article 99, consultations were generally more useful than open debates, although even at the Secretary-General's luncheons members had encouraged him to be more candid, which he had been. The Secretariat could do more to clarify where it saw the greatest risks ahead. A participant added that, although there had generally been productive cooperation between the Secretary-General and the Council on prevention efforts, sometimes political problems arose when the Council became engaged. In the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Nicaragua, for instance, sovereignty concerns were cited even though the situations had produced a million refugees, adversely affecting neighbouring countries. There, regional action was also needed.

It was essential, noted a discussant, for the Council to develop closer collaboration with regional organizations, which could play a key role in helping to apply global

norms on the ground in conflict situations. The value of regional partners, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Organization of American States, had been proven many times, asserted a second speaker. According to a third interlocutor, collaboration with regional bodies was, for the Council, the call of the future. In Africa, that included subregional arrangements, as well as the African Union. On that continent, some things were done better, with greater efficiency and legitimacy, without the United Nations flag. In the case of Eritrea, another participant pointed out, it was better that others took the lead with the support of the Council.

A discussant suggested that the Council consult regional organizations about where it could have the most impact. For instance, how could it bring added value to the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela? The Council's collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States in the Gambia had been very productive. Closer partnership with regional and subregional arrangements, added a second interlocutor, would be increasingly important in the future given their critical role in ensuring the implementation of Council decisions. According to a third participant, the Council should work to strengthen regional institutions and their capacities. Sometimes, regional organizations should take the initiative and the Council should follow. However, it needed to be recognized that regional bodies were not always as strong and capable as one would want. The League of Arab States, for instance, was weak, yet on the Syrian Arab Republic it had done a better job than the Council on early peacekeeping deployments and on sanctions, given its decision to suspend Syrian participation. The appointment of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States to Syria had been agreed in tandem and the League took a strong stance on weapons of mass destruction in the Syrian Arab Republic. Generally, the Council should help to ensure that regional bodies were well structured and had the necessary resources to carry out their mandates.

In the view of a discussant, the Council should develop productive working relationships with regional organizations and with countries that had particular concerns about a specific situation. It was very important to consult regional bodies regularly. Close cooperation with the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other regional and subregional groups was essential to ensuring the Council's success on the continent. The discussant wondered how best the Council could further its collaboration with such groups and support them in the future. Another speaker called for the Council to defer more regularly to the African Union and African subregional bodies on conflicts in Africa. There had been a surge of interest within Africa in working to resolve conflicts on the continent. That had led to some successes in line with a continuing desire to move beyond the legacy of colonialism and to be given a chance to make a difference.

A participant urged the members of the Council to define international peace and security broadly. If too narrow a definition were adopted, it would limit the opportunities for progress on many issues and situations. According to a second speaker, a gap had emerged between the ways in which thematic and situational matters were addressed by the Council. For example, issues related to women, peace, and security had not been fully mainstreamed into the work of the Council. There were still relatively few women in top positions in delegations, the speaker continued. In the view of a third interlocutor, a delicate balance had been achieved between thematic and situational issues, and it should be maintained.

Session II

Working methods and subsidiary bodies

Moderator

Ambassador Mansour Alotaibi
Permanent Representative of Kuwait

Commentators

Ambassador Joanna Wronecka
Permanent Representative of Poland

Ambassador Anatolio Ndong Mba
Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea

Anne Gueguen
Deputy Permanent Representative of France

Assessment of and prospects for the “507 process”

A speaker noted that working methods were not an end in themselves. They had been evolving over the years in a dynamic manner, adapted to meet the needs of the Security Council at any given point in time. They would never be perfected. It was therefore incumbent on the members to constantly re-evaluate the work of the Council and the way in which it was carried out. The note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#)) contained everything needed for the proper functioning of the Council, yet much more work was needed on its implementation. In that regard, the most contentious issues continued to relate to who should hold the pen and chair subsidiary bodies. Arrangements had been worked out concerning how to handle those matters in a fair and transparent manner, but they had not been fully and consistently put into practice. Over time, practice should set the standards for the Council’s working methods. Although change occurred slowly in the Council and might not be visible over a two-year term, over time the degree of movement was encouraging. Credit was due, in part, to the leadership of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. Good things could be expected in 2019, especially if the incoming members brought fresh ideas and the non-permanent members could agree on next steps and priorities.

Looking back over the previous 25 years, a discussant said that significant progress had been made on improving working methods, thanks in part to the leadership of some of the permanent members at critical junctures. The five permanent members had been a source of energy and innovative ideas, yet not enough had been achieved and much more needed to be done. The agreement on note [S/2017/507](#) had represented a milestone, and the Informal Working Group had focused on the implementation of its provisions. A number of meetings and informal discussions had been held in 2018, but there remained some concerns on the part of the permanent members and it was essential not to push forward too quickly. It was expected that 2019 would be an active year for the Informal Working Group, with some ideas emerging from it to be put to the whole Council membership. Although the permanent members valued flexibility and might not want to codify everything, efforts would be made in the coming year to identify means of enhancing both transparency and efficiency.

The members of the Council, commented an interlocutor, needed to agree on the rules of procedure. They could not be considered provisional forever. The interlocutor suggested that it might be time to formalize them. A second speaker also asked why the rules of procedure were still provisional, and added that the text failed to take gender into account and needed to be updated. It was time to polish the text and then

make the rules permanent. According to a third discussant, it was time to make real progress on Council reform.

Meetings and consultations

A participant regretted the trend of spending more time in the Security Council Chamber and less time in consultations, which had reduced the time available to listen to one another, leaving the members to a kind of collective ADHD. There was a tendency to overload the monthly programme of work, which should not include more than two open debates per month. Such debates should only be organized if there was a real need. Likewise, there did not have to be a meeting to mark every reporting cycle, and political coordinators should meet beforehand to determine whether such meetings were actually needed. Both consultations and meetings held in public should be more interactive, more focused and better prepared. Briefers should be consulted in advance and video aids and maps used as appropriate. Meetings should be shorter, in part through the enforcement of the five-minute rule for speakers. At the same time, consultations should be arranged in a way that allowed everyone to have some input and feel a sense of ownership. It was also essential to keep the wider United Nations membership and troop-contributing countries informed of developments within the Council and to consult troop-contributing countries and countries concerned well in advance of mandate renewals.

The Security Council Affairs Division had provided very useful statistics about Council meetings and activities, noted a speaker, but it was essential to remember that there was no assured correlation between the number of hours spent in the Security Council Chamber and the results achieved either at Headquarters or on the ground. The question needed to be asked, for instance, which agenda items most merited the attention of the Council. In the Informal Working Group, members should give more thought to ways of making consultations more interactive, such as by setting aside talking points and speaking from the heart and mind. In the past, even when the President had tried to encourage greater interactivity, members had tended to stick to their stubborn ways. It would help to promote dialogue if more use was made of briefers from civil society. In addition, the fast pace of the Council's work tended to make it difficult to find time for a proper assessment of the matters being addressed or to consult capitals.

Agreeing with an earlier speaker, a discussant noted that, on average, over the course of any given month 44 per cent more activities were added to the Council's preliminary programme of work. An interlocutor concurred that the tendency to add meetings during a monthly presidency was making it harder for delegations to plan and utilize resources properly. It would be helpful, noted a third participant, if the President would indicate in advance of the meeting what it was intended to accomplish and what outcomes were being sought. Sometimes, commented a fourth participant, there were two meetings scheduled under "any other business" in a single week. That made it very difficult to prepare properly, especially for smaller delegations. Another discussant noted that the increase in the number and length of meetings had not been matched by similar growth in the quantity of outcomes. It appeared that it was taking longer in recent years to reach agreement, given the divisions within the Council. That underscored the need to develop qualitative, rather than just quantitative, measures of the Council's productivity and performance.

One monologue followed by another did not equal a dialogue, it was pointed out. Generally, Council discussions should be shorter and more focused. The Council needed better time management and more interactivity, added a second interlocutor. There was too much reading of speeches and some delegations felt an obligation to speak on every issue. Time limits should be observed more regularly. In the view of a third discussant, the Council had to be more than the product of 15 sets of talking

points. According to another speaker, it would be productive to hold more informal interactive dialogues, which tended to offer an opportunity to hear a wider range of voices and to speak more candidly.

A participant urged that representatives of troop-contributing countries be given a greater voice, especially in the shaping of mandates. Another speaker questioned whether the Council was making full use of the expertise offered by the Secretariat. Special advisers, representatives and envoys, for instance, were not always candid when briefing the Council and few permanent representatives sought to consult with them beforehand. If there were closer working relationships with them, the Council could offer important political support to special advisers, representatives and envoys. In the view of a third interlocutor, a double standard was often applied to the way representatives of civil society were treated by the Council. The Council needed to hear from a wider range of viewpoints, and experts from civil society could often provide a better account of what was happening on the ground. Their participation in the Council's work deserved greater respect.

According to a discussant, the proliferation of "Arria formula" meetings was causing scheduling problems and taking up time that could have been devoted to regular Council business. A perception had formed that issues were not important unless they were addressed by the Council. Sometimes it would be more productive to respect the substantive division of labour that had been intended among the principal organs.

Penholders

It was pointed out that the question of who held the pen remained a sensitive matter. Clearly something needed to be done, but despite some signs of convergence between the views of permanent and non-permanent members, there had been no breakthrough. There should be greater clarity on the rules for penholdership, although the issue had been addressed in note [S/2017/507](#). According to a second speaker, delegations should be able to take the pen without humiliation or opposition. The chairs of sanctions committees should be able to hold the pen. The agreements that had been reached on penholdership, as reflected in [S/2017/507](#), had not been upheld.

A participant pointed out that the concept of penholdership was relatively new, although questions about who drafted outcomes and who chaired negotiations had always existed. At one point, the Secretariat had prepared initial drafts. Note [S/2017/507](#) referred to such arrangements as informal, so perhaps it would be better not to codify those practices but to keep them adaptable in the light of the growing complexity of the issues being addressed by the Council. Some resolutions were quite brief, while others, such as those concerning sanctions, tended to be very long and detailed. Any member could propose a text at any point in the process, and there had been several successful examples of non-traditional penholders recently. The question was less who held the pen than how they held it. The trend towards inclusivity, the employment of co-penholders and flexibility should be encouraged.

If co-penholdership was such a good idea, responded a discussant, why had there been two recent cases in which such a request had been denied? Another interlocutor expressed a willingness to share the pen with other members. That would require a clear division of labour and a readiness to move at the same pace. Such an expression of openness to co-penholdership was encouraging, stated another participant. Another interlocutor also welcomed such openness, but said that the whole notion of penholdership had not been codified and had evolved substantially over time. Incoming members should be active in the drafting process, as their experience in that regard had been very positive and their views had usually been taken into account by penholders. The pen, however, was held in very few hands, which sometimes created

a backlog when the penholders got overloaded, resulting in delays. Incoming members should remember that there would be lots of room to take the initiative on those matters.

It was logical, asserted a speaker, to encourage the chairs of sanctions committees to serve as co-penholders. Another discussant expressed agreement with that point. A third participant suggested that, as a general practice, the chairs of all Council committees should have the opportunity to serve as co-penholders. The system of penholdership should be more open and flexible. One member recalled that their delegation had usually been able to work productively with penholders, especially on situations within their own region, and wondered, therefore, whether it should become regular practice to allow members to serve as co-penholders on issues within their regions. Another discussant said that very few African members had served as co-penholders, but the time had come when that should become standard practice for all regions.

There was also the question of the quality of draft resolutions, noted an interlocutor. The drafts produced by the missions' experts were not always well crafted, in part because of a tendency to repeat poor language from earlier Council documents. Given the "Christmas tree" effect, drafts tended to be too long and complex. It should be possible to do justice to the Council's principles without rewriting the Charter. In earlier times, the drafting process had often involved protracted consultations aimed at getting drafts right. Perhaps a tutorial on drafting was in order, the interlocutor suggested. Incoming permanent representatives should be warned, commented another speaker, that their lives on the Council would be a lot less interesting than those of their experts, who would do most of the drafting and negotiating. A third interlocutor agreed with the criticism about the quality of most drafts, particularly those laying out sanctions regimes. Often they provided an impossible basis for negotiation.

A participant agreed that improving the quality of drafts was essential, but that also raised the question of what constituted a good resolution. That question was complicated by the uneven distribution of information among the members of the Council, which could be a particular challenge to members that did not have embassies throughout the world. Troop-contributing countries were in the greatest need of current and accurate information about developments on the ground, while the Council as a whole required a more informed decision-making process. Another discussant concurred that there was a need to give a greater voice to troop-contributing countries, contending that those members sending troops abroad should be given the opportunity to serve as co-penholders for relevant resolutions. A third speaker also expressed concern about the quality of drafts, noting that there was often a need for greater clarity and better understanding of the nuances of language and legal expressions. It was hard to know how to implement ambiguity. According to a fourth discussant, one of the most striking changes in Council practice over the years had been the marked growth in the length of most resolutions. Everyone sought to add references to their favoured issues in each draft.

One participant said that their delegation was not wedded to any hard rules on penholdership and was open to looking at penholder arrangements again, although it would be important to implement a drafting process that kept things moving. A second speaker also expressed support for a more flexible approach to penholding, as long as the process remained speedy and efficient. They were glad to share the pen and the responsibility with non-permanent members. It had been their experience, however, that sometimes the latter were reluctant to take the pen. The problem, noted another discussant, was that three members had a virtual monopoly on wielding the pen. It had not always been like that. It was a good idea to have co-penholders and it had been reassuring to hear several permanent members endorse that concept.

A speaker pointed out that according to note [S/2017/507](#) any member of the Council could hold the pen at any point. A second discussant noted that a number of decisions regarding working methods had been taken at the workshops over the years and suggested that perhaps it was time to do so on the matter of penholding. The non-permanent members were simply seeking to assist the permanent members by sharing this burden. Another interlocutor related that their experience with co-penholders had been quite positive. According to a fourth participant, the Informal Working Group was likely to try to do something in 2019 regarding penholdership. The many indications given at the current workshop regarding flexibility in this regard were encouraging. Permanent members should understand that non-permanent members were offering both to assist them and to increase the legitimacy of the Council at the same time.

Subsidiary bodies

A participant spoke of the experience of chairing sanctions committees. In 2018 there had been more consultations about the distribution of committee assignments than in the past and the process was more interactive. Working within some guidelines, chairs had the opportunity to take a creative approach to the work. It was important to develop relationships with the country concerned and with neighbouring countries that could be affected. Through a mix of formal and informal meetings, sanctions committees could create opportunities to establish a more positive dynamic with the region and stakeholders. The goal was to engender positive change. Notes were sent on a regular basis and there were a lot of reports. All of that was a huge amount of work. The chair's Mission should have two or three experts with knowledge of the situation on the ground, but with a neutral attitude. Committee documents were disseminated to all members, each of whom could exercise a veto given the consensus rules in committees. The chair needed to be diplomatic, although one could work to update guidelines for dealing with each situation, such as on how to implement an embargo. Joint meetings with other sanctions committees had proven useful, but were difficult to schedule. Consultations with relevant special advisers, representatives and envoys, such as those on sexual violence and on children and armed conflict, had added interesting substance to committee deliberations. It was incumbent on the chair to inform all Member States of their obligations to carry out sanctions regimes and to keep them fully informed of developments. A chair could often bring valuable expertise to the drafting process as a co-penholder. In general, concluded the participant, there was a need for wider consultations, better preparation of incoming chairs, consideration of small group visits to countries of concern, and enhanced interpretation services into all six official languages.

Agreeing that chairing sanctions committees entailed a very heavy workload, a speaker underscored the importance of bringing competent experts into one's mission. There were many restrictions on what a chair could and could not do. The permanent members should put more trust in chairs to get the job done. The wider United Nations membership was very interested in how sanctions committees worked and it was necessary to keep them informed. Another discussant commented that the post of ombudsperson had remained open for too long and that it was important for the members to give the post proper support. A third interlocutor pointed out that it had been proposed that every sanctions committee should have its own ombudsperson.

Over the years, noted a participant, the number of subsidiary bodies had grown and the workload had skyrocketed. Much of the wider United Nations membership was not aware of what they were doing, as they constituted the most opaque dimension of the Council's work. Yet the membership was tasked with providing information to multiple subsidiary bodies. There was a need, therefore, for better outreach, the clarification of guidelines and more overview of their activities by the

Council as a whole. In the light of that situation, the participant wondered why the permanent members did not chair any of the subsidiary bodies.

A speaker responded that, to the best of their knowledge, the permanent members did not chair those bodies because at some point in the “mists of time” it had been felt that this gave too much power to the permanent members. A second discussant commented that if chairing was such a privilege, they would be glad to share the opportunity with the permanent members. According to a third participant, there were good substantive reasons not to have permanent members in the chair. Political divisions among the permanent members could impede the work of the subsidiary bodies that they led. Candidates to join the Council had sometimes campaigned on the prospect of chairing one committee or another. On occasion, they had changed their minds once they had seen how much work was involved. Some of the working groups could also be quite sensitive. The permanent members could chair some of the subsidiary bodies, but only if that would benefit the Council as a whole, concluded the participant. Another interlocutor expressed agreement with these points.

Given the principle of shared responsibility in the Council, asserted a participant, it was proper for permanent members to chair some of the subsidiary bodies. All 15 members should share that responsibility. In the view of a second discussant, it would be important to avoid unintended consequences in making such a change. Instead of taking an all-or-nothing approach, it would be prudent to consider first which committees or working groups ought to be led by permanent members. Another speaker commented that it would not be appropriate for a permanent member to chair the Informal Working Group.

A participant said that none of the rationales that had been voiced for permanent members not chairing subsidiary bodies had been convincing. If chairmanships were too powerful, then perhaps permanent members should not hold the pen or serve as President. Another discussant said that permanent members could chair subsidiary bodies, but that then there might be a lack of rotation in the posts. A third interlocutor suggested that permanent members could rotate, just as non-permanent members did. Since permanent representatives never attended the meetings of subsidiary bodies, how could representatives of permanent members be familiar with how those bodies operated? If committees were too sensitive for permanent members, then perhaps so too was the presidency of the Council, pointed out the interlocutor.

Given the burden imposed by chairing sanctions committees and other committees, a discussant asked whether thought had been given to the possibility of having deputy permanent representatives chair them. There could also be a continuing role, perhaps in an advisory capacity, for outgoing members. Another participant responded that it should be possible for deputy permanent representatives to chair subsidiary bodies. Since permanent representatives generally did not attend such meetings, the usual mix was a single permanent representative in the chair surrounded by experts from the other members. The question who should lead particular committees or working groups should depend in part on whether their work was primarily substantive, procedural or political.

Visiting missions and other matters

In the view of a participant, visiting missions could be valuable, but there were questions of cost and efficiency. The missions sometimes lacked sufficient documentation or outcomes. The participant wondered how the Council should decide when and where missions should be undertaken, and for what purpose. A second speaker commented that such missions could enrich members’ understanding of the situation on the ground, but they should pay more attention to local public opinion

and link it to decision-making within the Council. There should be clear criteria and objectives for such undertakings, for instance seeking to better understand the conditions on the ground that United Nations personnel were facing. In planning missions to Africa, the African Union should be consulted beforehand and, whenever possible, a joint mission should be considered. According to a third discussant, visiting missions could be helpful: they were costly but necessary. In some cases, however, planning could be improved.

An interlocutor called for closer relationships with regional organizations. That could help to make Chapter VIII of the Charter a working reality. In 2019, commented another speaker, the Council should focus more attention on the plight of Syrian refugees. A third discussant urged members to adhere to deadlines on no-objection procedures. According to a fourth participant, the members of the Council needed to make a greater effort to find consensus.

Session III

Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2018

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Comments

Their term on the Security Council, noted a discussant, was filled with both challenges and satisfaction. It was a chance to feel like an integral part of the United Nations system. The workload, especially for smaller delegations, was very heavy. Incoming members should understand that most of the substantive challenges they would face in 2019 would be long-standing, passed from one group of newly elected members to the next. Over the past two years, it had become apparent, however, that the results achieved by the Council could not be measured just by outcomes produced. The Council was a contributor to a longer-term and wider process of maintaining international peace and security.

There was no doubt, underscored a participant, that the previous two years had been a particularly difficult period in the life of the Council. Both the strategic context and the political dynamics had been challenging. At times, the Council had been paralysed. When there were sharp differences among the permanent members, extra pressure had been brought to bear on the elected ones. The division on strategic issues had begun to affect other matters, including thematic ones, such as human rights, water, international humanitarian law and climate. Their delegation had focused on a series of regional issues, as well as on ways to strengthen peacekeeping operations. With regard to issues in other parts of the world, they had tried to maintain a balanced

and principled stance. The earlier, mid-year date for elections to the Council had helped immensely in providing newly elected delegations with sufficient time to prepare for life on the Council. The participant's delegation had found that the frequent use of "any other business" and Arria formula meetings had added significantly to the workload.

A discussant suggested that serving on the Council was like the difference between sitting in a restaurant and being in the kitchen. It was time to welcome the newly elected members to the devil's kitchen. When the 5 permanent members were divided, the 10 elected ones could help to build confidence, even bridges. There had been real progress on matters pertaining to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, confidence-building measures and several conflicts in Africa. It was important to listen to regional perspectives, and it was good to see the Council again interested in developments in Central Asia. The Council's visiting missions had generally proven helpful in giving members a better feel for the situation on the ground. There was a need, however, for the Council to have a better appreciation of the peace, security and development nexus. When all of the members appeared before the press as a group, it left a positive impression of a unified and determined Council. The keys to the Council's success remained unity and a collective approach to problem solving.

A participant said that it had been an honour and, more importantly, a seminal responsibility to serve on the Council. There was a pressing need, however, to devote more attention to implementing the Council's decisions. That was a prerequisite to boosting the Council's legitimacy. In that regard, more appreciation should be shown for the sacrifices made by troop-contributing countries in carrying out Council mandates. The members of the Council needed to maintain close ties with the Secretary-General and encourage him to be candid in his interactions with the Council. As noted in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, the Secretary-General should tell the members of the Council what they needed to know, not what they wanted to hear. When entering the Council two years ago, it had been striking how little respect members extended to one another. There had been some progress on that front since then, but members should be more conscious that differences on issues should not result in attacks on one another's character. It was important to bear the health of the Organization in mind. There had been a troubling politicization of humanitarian issues, at some points causing a stalemate when urgent action had been called for. Too often, the threat of a veto had cast a dark shadow over the work of the Council. It was time to adopt a higher threshold for its use. The question of women and peace and security should be an easy win for the Council, a rare case of low-hanging fruit on its agenda. It was reassuring that the Council had been using that language more regularly, but there was still a need to have more women around negotiating tables in conflict resolution settings. Although permanent members had a tendency to view elected members as hyperactive, they should appreciate that the latter had only two years to try to leave their mark, the participant stressed.

A discussant pointed out that all members had a responsibility to protect children and other vulnerable populations. It was hard to engage in dialogue when one was impoverished and hungry. Non-permanent members needed to remember why the larger membership had elected them in the first place. There was an old African saying, noted another speaker, that every child was my child. In war zones, children were being brutalized physically and psychologically. Members of the Council needed to think about the fate of children, not just about short-term political gains and losses. Faced with a generation of lost children, what would be the resulting challenges to peace and security in the years ahead? A third interlocutor urged incoming members to keep a strategic approach and high ethical standards.

Legacy mattered, commented a participant. Members needed to transmit their experiences to others. For instance, the chairs of subsidiary bodies could prepare handover materials for their successors. Members needed to respect and build on the work of their colleagues. Another discussant suggested that the members should look for synergies between the work of the subsidiary bodies and that of other United Nations entities. Civil society, including think tanks, academics and non-governmental organizations, had been very helpful to their delegation. According to a third speaker, handovers could be very helpful in ensuring that chairs did not have to start their work from zero. In that regard, the permanent members, at every level, had shared information about the workings of the Council. Consideration might be given, however, to the possibility of allowing newly elected members to observe Council proceedings from the time of their election in the middle of the year. Another speaker said that the frequency of Arria formula meetings had indeed increased, from 17 in 2017 to 23 to date in 2018, putting greater pressure on scheduling.

Given the value of the range of experiences voiced during the workshop, a speaker suggested that it would be useful to find ways of disseminating them more widely. A second interlocutor commented on the range of possible initiatives to improve the work of the Council that had been articulated during the workshop. They gave some reason for hope that 2019 could be a productive year for enhancements in the Council's working methods. However, progress on internal matters did not always produce external progress on the Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security. Another participant underscored that the core purpose of the workshops had been, and continued to be, to assist newly elected members as they embarked on their terms on the Council. In addition, however, they had become a vehicle to facilitate the reform of the Council's working methods. In both respects, the ultimate purpose was to help strengthen a rules-based international system.

A speaker noted that one participant in a recent workshop had enumerated 24 lessons learned, one for each month on the Council. The number of lessons learned voiced in subsequent workshops appeared to exceed 30. Another interlocutor recommended making sure that one touched base with the following 11 parties every month: (a) all other Council members, as personal relations and partnerships mattered; (b) other elected members, including at meetings of the 10 elected members, to share experiences; (c) one's own hard-working team, whose members allowed one to have an impact; (d) the Secretary-General and other key players in the Secretariat; (e) officials in one's capital, for if one did not keep in regular communication with them, others, including some permanent members, might; (f) national embassies and missions in the field, which could act as one's eyes and ears on the ground; (g) regional organizations, especially the African Union and the European Union; (h) national and international press outlets, which should be briefed on important developments; (i) other permanent representatives, through regional and cross-regional briefings; (j) non-governmental organizations and people back home, who were key stakeholders in all that one did; and (k) friends and family, as one should not neglect to have a life.

Among the lessons learned mentioned during session III, the following were highlighted:

- Initially the learning curve is steep, but it gets better.
- You do not have to be original. Build on the accomplishments of others.
- Learn when to be vocal and where and when you can make a difference.
- Prepare for your presidency from day one. Plan your presidency carefully and get buy-in from others on any signature events. Be transparent during a presidency, as no one likes surprises. As President, move to consultations

quickly and work out procedural matters before anyone proposes voting on drafts.

- Less can be more in a presidency. There is no requirement to hold a high-level event. Do not be too ambitious, and do not organize too many meetings and events.
- Convening open debates is usually a bad idea.
- Prepare yourself on every issue, as if you were President that month.
- Manage expectations, especially from capitals. Political coordinators have to manage the expectations of permanent representatives, while permanent representatives have to manage the expectations of capitals. Frequently communicate with your capital, as a gap there could be fatal.
- Prepare and prioritize. Pick three or four files and stay with them. Formulate clear priorities from the outset, as two years go by very quickly. In all the noise, do not get distracted from those priorities.
- Expect the unexpected. There will always be events you cannot anticipate.
- Build a strong team and delegate. You cannot do everything. It is critical to have a sensible and sustainable division of labour in one's mission. Keep your experts motivated. Get good ones and keep them engaged. Keep communicating with your team, trust them and support them. Monitor their health and avoid burnout.
- Think of the Security Council Affairs Division as your repository of institutional memory. Rely on the staff of the Secretariat, as they can be very helpful. Pay attention to Secretariat and support staff. They play critical roles in the functioning of the Council.
- Work with special advisers, representatives and envoys, support them, give them quality mandates to implement, and value their ground-level perspectives on crisis situations.
- Do not neglect the expertise that Security Council Report brings to the table. Its advice could be invaluable at the outset of one's tenure and before assuming the presidency. Use the organization's high-quality analytical reports.
- Rely on other Council members for advice, including permanent members, especially on procedural questions. Build alliances, issue by issue. You can always find partners.
- Stay flexible and transparent in dealing with other Council members. They do not like surprises any more than you do.
- Do not expect the elected members to always agree. They represent a range of perspectives and interests.
- Rely more on regional organizations for perspective and experience. Meet with and listen to representatives of the countries concerned and their neighbours. They may enlarge your viewpoint.
- Reach out to civil society and brief non-governmental organizations. They could become valuable allies on certain agenda items.
- Utilize Arria formula meetings to raise awareness and generate fresh perspectives.
- Take part in visiting missions. Seeing is better than reading. Missions provide both first-hand experience and a bonding experience with other permanent

representatives. Visit countries of concern and assess for yourself the situation on the ground.

- Look for space. It is always there. Make use of it.
- Do not be shy: penholding is open to everyone.
- Master small things: ask questions of briefers; be prepared to pay travel costs for briefers from non-governmental organizations; do not speak too quickly or overload the agenda for fear of losing the interpreters; and try to ignore the petty rules that govern behaviour in the consultations room.
- Accept that there are no quick fixes or easy answers to most tough challenges. There is a reason why your predecessors did not resolve them. With unity and collaboration, however, the Council can accomplish great things.
- Over two demanding and trying years, preserve your identity and reputation.
- Do not get carried away with your new status. It will not last.
- You will be back in the General Assembly in two years, so do not forget your friends who supported your candidacy.
- Deliver on what you promised in your campaign. That will add to the Council's legitimacy.
- For 30 seconds every day, sit back and remind yourself of where you are and what you are doing. Appreciate the opportunity, because it is special.

Appendix

Prior to the workshop, Mr. Luck suggested the following discussion questions:

Session I

- What would be your overall assessment of the performance of the Security Council so far in 2018 in terms of meeting its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security? How would its performance this year compare with that of other recent years? Are the trend lines, on the whole, encouraging or discouraging?
- From a strategic perspective, what factors are making the vital work of the Council more demanding or less demanding? Is the political and strategic environment within which the Council operates likely to be more or less propitious in 2019?
- At last year's workshop, the Secretary-General declared that in 2018 "it could not be business as usual" for the Council. In terms of setting goals for the coming year, how ambitious should the Council be? What standards and expectations should it set itself for 2019 and beyond?
- Where – geographically, thematically and operationally – has the Council made the most positive difference since the previous workshop in November 2017? Why has it succeeded in those areas? Where has its performance been the most disappointing? Why? Were there opportunities to make a substantial difference that it missed? Where and why?
- What unfinished business will the newly elected members inherit in January? Where could they help to further or complete tasks already well under way? Where would ongoing and outgoing members urge them to focus their attention and energy?
- What should the Council's top priorities be in 2019? Where are the most promising opportunities, whether on situation-specific, regional or thematic matters? Where would fresh ideas or renewed energy pay the highest dividends in terms of advancing international peace and security?
- It is axiomatic that the Council achieves more when its members are united than when they are divided. On which issues are there prospects for narrowing differences in the coming year? What could incoming members do to identify such areas and to help build bridges within the Council? How could they best go about that effort?
- For several years running, participants in the workshop have pointed to counter-terrorism as an area in which the Council has been relatively united and relatively successful. At this point, should the emphasis be on sustaining political momentum behind this agenda, on refining and nourishing existing Council mechanisms and procedures, or on developing new tools and strategies? Is there a risk of becoming overly sanguine? Where might the greatest dangers lie in 2019?
- At the 2017 workshop, the Secretary-General enumerated three matters that could present growing challenges to international peace and security in a changing international environment: the nuclear threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran; the linkages among multiple conflicts in the Middle East; and possible cyberwarfare.
- Have diplomatic developments since then, including bilateral talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea and between

the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America, changed the ways in which the Council or other United Nations bodies could best contribute to resolving the nuclear danger posed by the actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea? Is there anything more that the Council could do to support these diplomatic efforts or to ensure the full implementation of Council-imposed sanctions in the coming year?

- In terms of the Islamic Republic of Iran, under Council resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#) and the relevant note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2016/44](#)), the Council has undertaken major responsibilities for carrying out the provisions of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Since the 2017 workshop, the United States has withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and reinstated unilateral sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran. What do these developments mean for how the Council should engage with these matters in the coming months? Will another member of the Council assume the position of facilitator in 2019?
- Although the Council has devoted a growing portion of its time to acute threats to international peace and security in the Middle East over the past few years, the conditions on the ground have not improved. The human costs of the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen have become incalculable and the political stalemate between Israel and its Palestinian neighbours shows no sign of easing. What would it mean for the Council to assume the more “global” perspective urged by the Secretary-General? Is there a need for a more strategic approach?
- Is there more that the Council could do to address the conflicts in the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and their immense human costs? Are the political dynamics shaping the armed struggle in Yemen changing in ways that might offer new opportunities in 2019? With the appointment of a new Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, is this a propitious time to rethink how the Council approaches the peace process, the use of chemical weapons and the humanitarian challenges there?
- As the Secretary-General has noted, cyberthreats are posing challenges to the maintenance of international peace and security that are qualitatively different to those of the past. What, if anything, should the Council do to better inform itself of such matters? Are there any preventive or normative steps that might be considered in 2019 or beyond?
- The Secretary-General has made prevention a hallmark of his approach to international peace and security, while participants in past workshops have repeatedly underscored the need for the Council to take a more preventive approach to items on its agenda. Has the Council utilized fully the tools of prevention outlined in Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter? Why does it so rarely invoke its investigative authority under Article 34?
- Does the reform plan initiated by the Secretary-General offer more space for a renewed emphasis on prevention by the Council and for collaboration with the Secretariat in anticipating crises and potential conflicts? Since the Council has primary but not sole responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, could more be done to enhance its collaboration with other intergovernmental organs, such as the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (in its role as a subsidiary and advisory body of the Council)?
- Could more be done, operationally, institutionally and/or normatively, to prevent the commission of atrocity crimes and to enhance accountability

afterwards? Could the Council have done more to prevent the events in Myanmar? Did the Council's visiting mission to Myanmar and Bangladesh earlier this year produce fresh insights regarding the way forward?

- At every workshop, there are calls for closer and more consistent working relationships between the Council and regional and subregional arrangements. As ties have been institutionalized with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, how have efforts to prevent and resolve conflict on the continent benefited? What were the major takeaways from the latest round of meetings between the two Councils?
- The Council's deliberations this year on sanctions related to the conflict in South Sudan raised a number of critical questions, both about the ways in which Chapter VII enforcement measures might speed up or impede peace processes and about the division of labour among global, regional and subregional actors. What has the course of events in South Sudan since the adoption of resolution [2428 \(2018\)](#) in July told us about these matters? What should we expect in 2019?
- The enhancement of peacekeeping operations remains high on the agendas of both the Council and the Secretariat, including through a series of high-level meetings of the Council, with another to come next month. Looking to 2019, should the emphasis be on implementation, monitoring and assessment or on the generation of further reform proposals? Is there any tension between the goals of efficiency and effectiveness? Can more be done to improve performance when it comes to the protection of civilians? Are further improvements needed in consultation with troop and police-contributing countries?
- For several years, the relative proportion of the Council's time devoted to situation-specific and regional issues and to thematic and cross-cutting concerns has remained at about the same level. Does this pattern suggest that a steady state has been achieved and that this balance seems reasonable to most Council members? In terms of thematic and normative concerns, where has the Council made its greatest contributions in 2018? Are there thematic and cross-cutting issues that should receive greater attention in 2019? In July, the Council debated the question of climate-related security risks, a matter that has been of keen interest to some newly elected members. Should the Council return to this matter in 2019 and, if so, in what format and to what ends?

Session II

- At every workshop, it is acknowledged that over the years much progress has been made in terms of enhancing working methods, but that more remains to be done. How would you assess the progress made to date? Has it been satisfactory, whether in terms of process or in terms of results?
- At the 2017 workshop, there was much discussion of the note by the President of the Security Council ([S/2017/507](#)) as a significant milestone in efforts to put the gains made to date in writing in a Council document. The emphasis at that point was on how to implement the specified measures and to consolidate the steps achieved in terms of Council procedures and processes. To what extent have those goals been achieved in 2018? Where has there been the most progress? Have there been any unintended consequences? Where has progress lagged?
- What were the key takeaways from the open debate on Council working methods convened by the President of the Council in February ([S/PV.8175](#))? Which of the points from the summary of views and proposals put forward in

that debate ([A/72/849-S/2018/399](#)) appear most promising at this point and which might be addressed down the road?

- In terms of reforming working methods, what should be the highest priorities in 2019? What would be reasonable expectations? Where and how could newly elected members make their greatest contributions to this process? How could the positive momentum be maintained or even accelerated? Could there be pushback if these questions are pushed too quickly before the measures already agreed are fully implemented and tested in practice?
- For some years, the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions has been in the vanguard of this movement towards refining working methods. Where should it devote its greatest effort in 2019? What more could its members, both current and newly elected, do to be helpful in the coming year?
- Why has it been possible to build coalitions of permanent and non-permanent members for change on some working method issues but not on others? What are the red lines? How are the political dynamics within the Council on these matters evolving, and what should incoming members expect in this regard?
- Because changes in working methods tend to take place over time, sometimes through a process of testing new approaches step by step, certain questions have been raised year after year in the workshop. Among these have been the following:
 - How to make consultations more informal, interactive and productive. Permanent and non-permanent members appear to agree on the need for change and a number of steps have been tried by one President or another to try to improve the experience, but this has proven to be a particularly stubborn issue. Are there fresh ideas or analysis on how to make this happen? Or is this just one of those endemic flaws that is perpetually resistant to easy and sustainable solutions?
 - How to make open debates more efficient, participatory, and focused. Here, the goals of transparency and inclusiveness seem to clash, more often than not, with those of time management and implementable outcomes. When does it make sense to convene open debates and how can they be utilized to advance key Council agendas, while enhancing perceptions of its legitimacy? Generally, have open debates been more productive when addressing thematic and/or cross-cutting or situational and/or regional-specific matters? What are recent examples of successful open debates and what advice might be offered to newly elected members as they assume the presidency of the Council?
 - How to maximize the utility of Council visiting missions. The Council's increasing use of such missions in recent years suggests that they serve a valuable set of purposes, from passing messages on first-hand, to meeting a wide range of local actors and stakeholders, to gaining a more nuanced and informed understanding of the issues at play in particular areas of concern. Questions persist, however, about planning, preparations, costs and results. Should the Council approach this matter from a more strategic perspective? Are there criteria that should be employed more rigorously in determining when and where to undertake such missions and procedures that should be followed with greater consistency? What are the views of incoming members about such matters?
 - How to make the selection of the chairs of subsidiary bodies a more open and participatory process. This question has been addressed in

paragraph 113 of note [S/2017/507](#) and in notes [S/2016/170](#) and [S/2016/619](#). Have the provisions of these notes been fully and successfully implemented? A number of modifications of the process have been employed in recent years, although views appear to differ as to whether they have been wholly successful. What further steps could be considered? What has been the experience of newly elected members on this to date?

- How to share the burden and responsibilities of leadership of subsidiary bodies. Currently, almost all subsidiary bodies are chaired by non-permanent members. Some years ago, this was not the case and a reform was undertaken to give the non-permanent members a larger share of this responsibility. There is some discussion of reconsidering that decision, although this appears to be at an early stage. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having permanent members chair some subsidiary bodies? How would the distribution be determined, and which bodies would benefit from permanent leadership and which would not?
- How to make the penholder system more equitable. Although this is the subject of paragraphs 78–82 of note [S/2017/507](#), in practice this has been a contentious matter. At past workshops, there has been much discussion of the advantages of having more members take the pen, including through the use of co-penholders. Efforts to open up the penholder system, however, have produced uneven results. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current system? Have current non-permanent members found resistance when they sought to assume these functions on a particular issue? When and where have these efforts succeeded? What would their advice be to newly elected members?
- In recent years, members of the Council have employed a wider range of meeting formats and made greater use of the “any other business” option to raise matters not formally on the Council’s agenda. In what ways have these practices enhanced or detracted from the work of the Council? Are there examples of the former or the latter? Do they provide incoming members with additional tools for advancing their agendas and/or do they complicate the orderly planning of the Council’s business?
- It appears that the 10 elected members are caucusing with greater regularity in recent years, as are the three African members. For what purposes has this growing practice proven useful? What have been the limits of what can be accomplished through such gatherings? What would be the advice for incoming members?
- Over the past year, where have the non-permanent members been able to make the most difference? Why and how? Where have their expectations fallen short? Why? Where have the permanent and non-permanent members formed successful coalitions to forward agendas of common interest? Where has this proven difficult? How should newly elected members go about identifying signature issues and building coalitions across the Council to advance them over the course of the next two years?