

Mr. Ruiz Cabañas (Mexico) (spoke in Spanish):

This annual debate has been held since 2010, but I believe, Sir, that today bears particular symbolic importance as we celebrate the tenth anniversary of presidential note S/2006/507, on the working methods of the Security Council, also under the leadership of your country, Japan.

The 2006 presidential note was the first step in ensuring that the Organization's States Members could make recommendations on the working methods, practices and formats of the Security Council with a view to effectively dealing with threats to international peace and security. We realize that the working methods of the Council are constantly changing. Proof of that is that in 2010, also under Japan's presidency and with Mexico as an elected member of the Council, there was an important updating and broadening of the earlier presidential note. Since that time, 13 additional notes have been issued, covering various aspects of the working methods of the Council. That is why Mexico welcomes the proposal that the Council once again update that note through the relevant working group, keeping in mind our successes and, above all, our goals and how we can reach them.

We have undoubtedly made progress in the past decade. The participation of many Member States in this open debate, as well as in other events, is a patent manifestation of the Council's improved working methods. Even if the pace of the improvements is slower than many would like, there are unambiguous indicators of the interest on the part of most to continue working towards great transparency and accountability. The holding of monthly meetings by some members of the Council at the end of each presidency has enabled the Council to increase the transparency it could not achieve during its work. In the interest of transparency, it is imperative for more and more countries to adopt such an approach.

Similarly, public meetings, interactive informal consultations and Arrria Formula meetings are mechanisms that have enabled greater interaction between members of the Council and other Member States, as well as other actors like civil society, and, at the same time, have allowed us to contribute to the transparency, legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council.

Another recent and critical change was the early election in June of new members of the Security Council, consistent with the recommendations in presidential note 507 and as reinforced by the presidential note presented a few days ago (S/2016/619). That decision will allow a significant period of transition between incoming and outgoing members, as the former can prepare ahead of time and attend, by invitation, Council meetings starting in October, months before the start of their term.

Finally, we believe that the flow of information to non-member States of the Council regarding the items under discussion in the Chamber has seen an improvement in recent years, in line with the recommendations in presidential note 507. That has been possible thanks to the commitment of some Council members, especially elected members, to keep their colleagues informed, and to the work of non-governmental organizations and academia in analysing and disseminating information relating to the Security Council.

At this moment of reflection, I would point out some elements that can and must continue to be improved.

First, it is essential for all members of the Council, both permanent and non-permanent, to draft and promote resolutions and statements concerning all aspects germane to this organ. Despite some limited progress in recent years, some draft resolutions are still drafted exclusively by the permanent members, a practice that must be avoided, as set forth in presidential note S/2014/268 two years ago.

We welcome the fact that, for the first time ever, the process of selecting the next Secretary-General will be more transparent and inclusive, and in particular that the General Assembly will play a major role. In a few days, the straw poll to elect candidates will begin in the Security Council. In that connection, I commend efforts to submit more than one name to the General Assembly in order to lend the selection of the next Secretary-General a genuine air of democracy. It will also be important to consider gender balance, as a quick glance at the history of the Organization will reveal that a woman has never been appointed to the position of Secretary-General.

Another issue that must be considered is the use of the veto power. For the past two years, Mexico and France have promoted an initiative to voluntarily refrain from its use in cases of mass atrocities. We believe that that initiative is one of the most realistic short-term options to reform the Security Council. Consequently, we are grateful that approximately 100 countries have decisively signed on to the initiative.

We also recognize the efforts and contributions of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, and in particular its code of conduct on the veto, which is another related initiative. Similarly, on the issues of accountability and the fight against impunity, we reaffirm the importance of the principle that the Council continue to be guided by clear, objective, and non-politicized criteria in the submission of cases to the International Criminal Court, in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. We support the initiative to create a mechanism within the Security Council to follow up on those referrals, especially when the Court itself sends notification of a lack of cooperation on the part of the State concerned.

Finally, a pending, but highly relevant, issue is the adoption of the rules of procedure of the Council. More than 70 years after its creation, the Council's rules should cease to be provisional so that we can strengthen the certainty of the Council's working methods.

After 10 years of discussion on working methods, the adoption of more than a dozen documents and the holding of several open debates, the progress achieved should be celebrated. However, we must also reflect on the reasons that the implementation of certain recommendations has been prevented, and direct our efforts towards ensuring compliance with them. It is important to make new proposals, but it is also important to accomplish what we have committed ourselves to.

I therefore welcome once again the efforts of Japan, as champion of this initiative, as well as its work within the framework of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters.