

**Mr. Pedersen (Norway):**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

I would like to touch on three issues, namely, the selection of the next Secretary-General, how the Security Council can become more open and transparent, and the role of the elected members of the Security Council.

First, with regard to the process of selecting the new Secretary-General, we are pleased to see that the selection process this time is much more open and inclusive, thereby allowing for better scrutiny of the suitability of candidates by Member States and the general public. The cooperation between the General Assembly and the Council on that issue has been remarkable. Through the informal dialogues with the candidates, organized by the President of the General Assembly, candidates have presented their visions for scrutiny by Member States. For the first time in history, an equal number of women and men have declared their candidacy. We urge the Security Council to maintain that openness and transparency all way through the process. There is no turning back to the practices of the past. At a minimum, we expect the Security Council to announce the results of the various straw polls through the President of the General Assembly. We are convinced that the increased transparency and openness that have been introduced into the selection process have already raised and improved the profile of the United Nations.

Secondly, the work of the Security Council should become more accessible. We appreciate that the Council conducts a significant number of its meetings in public, and we encourage it to put measures in place to enable the membership to be effectively informed about the topics discussed under “Any other business” during the closed consultations. There are also ways to improve the information flow. When press statements and presidential statements are adopted, it takes hours, if not days, before they are available on the Security Council’s website. It is a necessity that the work of the Council become more accessible for the broader membership and, indeed, the public.

Thirdly, moving the Security Council elections to earlier in the year is an important step that enables incoming members to prepare better for their term as members. We welcome the note adopted by the Council on Friday (S/2016/619), which aims to extend the period during which newly elected members can observe the work of the Council and to make the process for appointing the Chairs of subsidiary organs more timely and transparent. Duly implemented, those amendments to the current procedures will make the transition phase smoother and provide for enhanced participation by the elected members for the overall benefit of the effectiveness, coherence and accountability of the Council.

Finally, we encourage newly elected members to take advantage of the annual workshop organized by Finland, which aims to prepare incoming members for their membership of the Council.