

Security Council Open Debate on Working Methods

November 30th 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E Mr. Viinanen, Representative of Finland

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. I will deliver an abbreviated version of the statement circulated in the Chamber.

There has been considerable improvement in the Council's working methods in recent years. We underscore the need for regular informative briefings to non-members of the Council. Interactive wrap-up sessions at the end of each presidency would enhance information-sharing and openness. The Brazilian presidency held such a meeting, for which we thank it. We encourage other Council members to consider organizing such briefings in the future.

The annual Finnish workshop aims at giving new members of the Council an in-depth orientation to the practice, procedures and working methods of the Council, in order to help new members to hit the ground running. The workshops also serve the wider membership, as their reports are distributed as official documents of the Council.

The Security Council report is another initiative that has greatly contributed to information sharing and increased openness about the work of the Council.

Efficiency in the Council's work is very important. Conflicts today are more complex and the Council's agenda is increasingly stretched. There is scope for improving the quality of open debates by ensuring that outcome documents reflect input from all participating countries. Concept papers could direct the focus of debates to questions on which the Council would like to consult the larger membership.

Lately the Council has increasingly been using video links to receive briefings from the ground. This is a welcome development and we encourage the Council to continue developing the practice further. The Council should improve its cooperation with other United Nations bodies. In addition, troop- and police-contributing countries should be more closely engaged at all stages of decision-making for peacekeeping operations.

The Council should continue to actively seek ways to improve its ability to prevent conflict and to solve long-term conflicts on its agenda. Good cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission and other partner organizations, such as regional and subregional organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions and others, is instrumental in that endeavour.

The Council has made good progress in developing cross-cutting issues, such as women and peace and security. The Council should now systematically link country-specific situations and horizontal themes, and follow up on requests for thematic information when handling reports on country-specific situations.

The Nordic countries welcome the significant progress achieved in enhancing due process for the listing and de-listing procedures of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011)

concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities. We welcome the renewal of the mandate of the Ombudsperson. We recommend that fair and clear procedures be extended to all sanctions regimes.

We call on the Council to continue on a positive reform path and to hold annual open debates on this issue. In this context, we would like to emphasize the importance of presidential note S/2010/507, and we urge the Council to fully implement the innovations contained therein.