



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

NEW YORK, 11 MARCH 2024

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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NOTE S/2017/507: WORKING METHODS

STATEMENT BY H.E. DOMINIQUE HASLER

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Mr. President,

Let me first thank your delegation for the long-standing and consistent commitment to improving the working methods of the Council. Japan has shown leadership on this seemingly technical, but in reality substantively very essential file for almost two decades now. We commend you for this and are grateful to you.

Liechtenstein is a very small State and one of 60 Members that have never served on the Council – nor have we put forward a candidature to serve in the future, at this time. But, as is well known in this building,

we are taking a keen interest in the work of the Council and have made this a priority of our UN engagement for long years. We were a member of the S5 group whose work was the source of the first version of the famous note 507. More recently, we have led on the Veto Initiative, which has resonated so positively in the membership and beyond and is making a real difference in the work of the United Nations. Our very keen interest in the work of the Council is driven by two considerations:

First, we believe that it is of essential importance that all members of the organization have a sense of ownership of the Council's work – given that we have collectively delegated the work on peace and security to this august body.

Second, people in Liechtenstein view the United Nations primarily as a peace and security organization – which, of course, in accordance with the UN Charter it is. That is not to say that UN work in other areas is not considered to be important, for example in the area of disarmament, human rights and sustainable development.

Quite the opposite – the popular success of the 2030 Agenda, which connects these areas with peace and security, is quite unique in Liechtenstein. Nevertheless, our people automatically look at the UN and at this chamber whenever there is peace and security crisis of massive proportions – be it in Ukraine or in Gaza, in Myanmar or in Sudan. Too often, unfortunately, they are disillusioned by the inaction of the Council. Our strong interest in an effective Security Council is thus a key element of our political commitment to the UN as such and to the purposes and principles of the Charter. For small States such as ourselves, effective multilateralism has never been more important than today, as a matter of solidarity and of self-interest.

Mr. President,

The Council has made significant strides with respect to inclusion and transparency in the last decade or so – a development that has been mutually beneficial for the Council and for the membership as a whole.

Many of the improvements in the Council's working methods are the result of initiatives developed outside the Council itself – and non-members have taken a stronger interest in the work of the Council and have been able to increase their own expertise, also due to platforms such as the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and the work of the Security Council Report which we have supported from its inception. The more the Council struggles to make the decisions necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security, the more important the demand for accountability becomes.

We have delegated this work of essential importance to the Security Council – and when it is unable to do what it should, this is a collective failure for all of us, whether we were part of the decision-making or not. Very often, of course, the veto is at the heart of political paralysis.

We recognize that we have all ratified the UN Charter, which gives the permanent members the possibility to block Council decisions, unilaterally.

We also recognize that the abolition of the veto which a majority of the membership advocates for, is not a realistic option at this time. But we also believe that we must not merely be watching from the sidelines when the effect of the veto – whether through use or threat thereof – undermines the standing of the organization and its perception as most important peace project in the history of humankind.

The Veto Initiative is an important shift in the institutional balance among the political organs of the UN and the basis for empowering the GA on matters of peace and security, as mandated under the UN Charter.

Efforts such as the ACT Code of Conduct, which we had the honor to be the penholder of and is now supported by 130 States and the French-Mexican initiative are important political commitments to curtail the use of the veto. Every State running for Council membership should subscribe to them – and most importantly, of course, all its permanent members should.

We should not think about expanding the veto power when it already has such a negative impact on the work and the perception of the United Nations. Instead, we should think about realigning the reality of the veto that we will have to live with for the foreseeable future with the purposes of the UN Charter – and about alternative course for action in situations of permanent deadlock. We also believe that the drafters of the Charter showed great foresight in barring any State from decision making who is party to a dispute. It is up to us to ensure the application of this important provision in practice.

Mr. President,

We can all make a difference and a contribution to making the Council a more transparent and more accountable – and ultimately better – body.

We all must have a sense of ownership, both as the delegating constituency and because we are all affected by its action or inaction. We will continue making our voice heard in this conversation and look forward to doing this with all of you.

Thank you.