



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NOTE S/2017/507: WORKING METHODS

STATEMENT ATTRIBUTABLE TO H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the ACT Group.

Let me begin by honoring the memory of one of our former colleagues who made a big personal contribution to the working methods of the Security Council. Ambassador Kenzo Oshima, as Japan's Permanent Representative to the UN, oversaw the adoption of the first Note 507 in 2006. Liechtenstein sends its condolences and deep gratitude to his family and to all those who knew him.

Mr. President,

Working methods have long been an area subject to ongoing discussions and slow and gradual improvements, even before the challenge to maintaining business continuity created by the pandemic. The Council rose to the challenge in some areas; it found new ways to operate and made progress in harnessing technological innovations that may have otherwise taken far longer. The Council must now hold onto these improvements, while ensuring that it does not roll back on pre-COVID standards of working methods in areas where pandemic-induced progress has not

been so forthcoming. Liechtenstein hopes that submissions to this debate will help to inform ongoing discussions in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, and can in parallel contribute a thorough lessons learned process, so that the Council can be better prepared for future crises.

Mr. President,

We appreciate the progress that has been made in the holding of meetings via VTC over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. While before the pandemic, some briefers had been able to address the Council virtually, this practice has been further institutionalized in the Council's work. Briefers have had hitherto unforeseen opportunities to inform Council discussions, and record levels of high-level participation have been made possible, without the additional costs to our climate that relevant travel would otherwise entail. VTC participation should now be broadly accepted in Council meetings, with the aim of enhancing the inclusivity of the Council's discussions.

Mr. President,

In coming back to the chamber, we must ensure that the Council has not lost any of its agility to address situations with the requisite urgency. One tool that the Council has unfortunately been unable to utilize while absent from the chamber is the ability to hold procedural votes. While the frequent use of the procedural vote would be a signal of a dysfunctional Council, it can be an important way to address divisions, thus ensuring that the Council is fit for purpose.

Liechtenstein notes that the use of Arria-Formula meetings by members of the Council has increased significantly and, sometimes in a manner that is clearly not in keeping with its original purpose. In many cases, Arria-Formula meetings lend important value to the Council's work on topics where a formal meeting is not possible, as well as enhancing the Council's inclusivity and relevance. We are increasingly aware of the use of Arria-Formula meetings to bring negative atmospherics to the Council's work, or to provide a forum to promote narrow political interests

and narratives by a small group of States.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein congratulates Estonia for being able to bring the Council back to the chamber for the vast majority of your meetings, following the trend set by the Chinese presidency toward the end of May. In this respect, the natural next step for the Council is to make Open Debates truly open to the membership, by ensuring that the in-person format, including verbal statements, applies to all participants. The added value of Open Debates lies in its inclusivity and transparency, whereby UN member and observer states are given the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on equal terms to Council members. In its current guise the Council risks creating a 'two-tier' system for participation in Open Debates which defeats the very purpose of the format. We therefore encourage Council members to explore safe modalities for in-person participation in open debates, for example including timed arrivals of non-Council members and the use of the antechamber to ensure an uninterrupted flow in the speakers list.

I thank you.