



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT**

**by**

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to the United Nations**

**Open debate of the Security Council**

**on**

**Agility and innovation: lessons for the future from the COVID-19 pandemic**  
under the agenda item

**Implementation of the Note by the President of the Security Council  
(S/2017/507)**

**16 June 2021  
New York**

Mr. President,

I wish to congratulate Estonia on assuming the Presidency of the Security Council and thank for organizing this debate on the issue of working methods of the Security Council. I also wish to commend the leadership of Amb. Inga Rhonda King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) in guiding the deliberations of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions (IWG).

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the European Union.

Mr. President,

Working methods, not only of the Council but also of other organs of the United Nations, have always been an issue of interest for a large number of delegations, as they are intrinsically linked to the functioning of the Organization as the global cornerstone of multilateralism. The issue of working methods has become a central issue, as we collectively try to overcome the various challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has presented to the international community. More than one year has passed since the pandemic struck the World and, at first, brought many activities, including at the United Nations to a standstill. However, in retrospect, we believe that the Council has shown remarkable resilience, as well as a combination of creativity and formal rigour to ensure that it can deliberate on the matters on its agenda in a timely manner, while ensuring the necessary formal requirements commensurate to the responsibilities the Council assumes according to the Charter of the UN.

The effects of the pandemic on the functioning of multilateral institutions or, more generally, on the conduct of diplomatic relations itself, as well as the potentially long-term changes and trends it has induced, must be subject to a thorough reflection.

However, already at this stage, some of the working arrangements devised since March 2020 have demonstrated their value and should continue to be applied even after the restrictions on in-person meetings will have been fully lifted.

First, we encourage the continuation of the practice, whereby briefers join meetings of the Security Council via videolink. It enables to consider the participation of a larger pool of potential briefers. Thus, the Security Council may benefit from a wider range of information sources and views to inform its deliberations. Joining meetings of the Security Council via videolink seems to be much more efficient from the briefers' point of view, as well, as it causes a much smaller disruption to

their work schedules. It is further an efficient and cost-effective solution to the logistical constraints pertaining to travel to New York for briefers based elsewhere.

Second, Slovakia has always supported efforts aimed at enhancing openness of the work of the Security Council, including by strengthening the interaction between the Security Council and other Member States. In this regard, open debates have always played a central role. My delegation fully appreciates that the Security Council has enabled the presentation of views of non-members of the Council during open debates held throughout the pandemic, via the submission of written statements. This approach should, in our view, continue regardless of the existence of restrictions, as it offers a very efficient combination of full participation of non-members with effectively managing time in meetings of the Council.

Mr. President,

Notwithstanding the specific matters that have arisen due to the pandemic, my delegation wishes to underline the need to fully implement the existing measures and commitments set out in the updated Note 507 (S/2017/507), as well as in Notes S/2019/900 to 997, all adopted on 27 December 2019. The improvement of the working methods, the pursuit for more transparency, inclusiveness, representation and accountability of the Council must remain a continuous process.

More specifically,

We encourage further strengthening the substantive engagement of the Council with Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries to inform the decision-making of the Council and incentivize the general membership to support peacekeeping operations.

Further development of more active and meaningful relationships with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council and other relevant bodies could increase the Security Council's effectiveness of response to conflicts and strengthen its role in conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

Thirdly, the work of the subsidiary organs of the Security Council is crucial for the implementation of Council's decisions. Therefore, their working methods should be further improved, especially in instances that can affect the human rights of the persons concerned and their right to a due process. This is especially relevant for the various sanctions committees, considering *inter alia* the judicial review sanctions decisions have been subject to in various jurisdictions.

Mr. President,

The role of the non-permanent members in shaping and codifying Security Council working methods has proven to be very valuable and constructive. Having said that, I would like to wish the Chair of the IWG, as well as you, Mr. President as the Vice-Chair, all success in guiding the important endeavours of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I thank you.