



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*

Debate on the Annual Report of the Security Council (A/78/2) under agenda item 26

25 June 2024

ACCOUNTABILITY, COHERENCE & TRANSPARENCY (ACT)

**Statement by H.E. the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations
in New York, Ambassador Rui Vinhas, on behalf of the ACT Group**

Check against delivery

President,

I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of the twenty-seven members¹ of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group.

We welcome the timely adoption of the Annual Report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, under Mozambique's presidency of the Security Council on 16 May 2024 to whom we thank for facilitating its smooth adoption. We thank you also, President, for convening today's meeting and the Republic of Korea, as President of the Council for the month of June, for the presentation of the Report.

The ACT Group aims to promote a more transparent, effective, and efficient United Nations. In this regard, we advocate for the improvement of the Council's working methods, as well as other ways to promote the meaningful interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as with the ECOSOC and the PBC.

President,

The ACT Group would like to address the process and the substance of the Annual Report of the Security Council.

¹Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and Uruguay.



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*

First, the ACT Group welcomes the adoption of the Report by the Security Council² before the deadline of 30 May 2024, and commends the United Kingdom for its dedication in steering this process and coordinating the report's Introduction.

We would also like to welcome the interactive informal session held in January in preparation of the Annual Report, in line with Note 507 and ACT's prior recommendations. The meeting allowed for an insightful exchange of views on the Council's work last year, ahead of the drafting of the Introduction of the Report. The Council must continue to implement this agreed provision of Note 507 next year, and in the future, so that Member States and Observers can express their views and provide input for the preparation of the reports.

Furthermore, we welcome that last year's resolution on Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly³, took a first step to set a fixed timeline for the General Assembly discussion on the Annual Report suggesting its "timely consideration by the General Assembly in June". This enhances transparency and predictability for all. We would also highlight that a "timely" consideration would include the possibility for the GA to discuss the report earlier than June should the Council have successfully agreed it before the end of May.

Second, the introduction of the Report provides a factual overview of the work of the Security Council during 2023.

We welcome the inclusion of statistics in the introduction, namely on the participation of women, and of relevant information on the number of occasions where a veto was cast. The ACT Group also commends the references in the Report to substantive issues or trends, notably the references to the discussions on cooperation with regional organizations, peacebuilding, and small arms.

We note in the body of the Report the factual account of the work of the Security Council, and we encourage the Council to provide more complete, substantive and analytical account of its work to the General Assembly. We would like to highlight the importance to discuss instances where the Council has been unable to act despite an obvious need and a mandate.

We would therefore welcome further details on the draft resolutions that failed to be adopted by the Council, such as a brief description of the resolutions' purposes and main provisions, and an indication of the grounds for rejection.

We acknowledge the reference to the submission of special reports in accordance with the Veto Initiative⁴, and the information included on the adoption of a resolution in line with the Uniting for Peace Resolution⁵. It is the first time that such a chapter on the veto, with the cases in which it has been exercised, is included in the body of the Council's Annual Report. This is a significant

²337 A (V). As set out in its Note by the President S/2019/997.

³ A/RES/77/335

⁴ A/RES/76/262

⁵377 A (V).



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*

achievement following successive calls in this regard. We welcome this very positive step towards more accountability.

We believe the Report should also include statements of explanation by the Permanent Members who exercised the veto, and statistics on the number of times it has been exercised in the past.

Information could also be included on the implementation of Security Council's Resolutions and Decisions, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation.

At a time where the number of vetoes has increased significantly, the General Assembly must be ready to fill the gap left by the use of the veto. We need to strengthen the General Assembly's own role in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly when the Council cannot or does not act.

In this regard, President, we also congratulate your commitment to working with the membership to produce a handbook on the peace and security role of this Assembly during your tenure.

Third, the ACT Group has long advocated for greater transparency in the work of the Council. We therefore wish to encourage the timely compilation and use of the monthly Assessments by Council presidencies, which constitute important reference documents reflecting the views of members on the work of the Council. As such assessments don't represent the views of the Council as a whole, but rather the view of the Presidency of the month, its substance should not be reduced to the lowest common denominator.

We commend the efforts to increase the transparency by holding wrap-in and wrap-up sessions, and we recall ACT's non-paper with a view to improve interactive exchanges.

As a complementary document, we would also like to highlight the important work of the Security Council Affairs Division in preparing the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council. We encourage all Member States to provide contributions to ensure the preservation of the Council's institutional memory.

Fourth, and lastly, we suggest the Annual Report should highlight information regarding the Council's closed consultations, and discussions held under "any other business" to promote transparency and help the Membership understand the full range of issues and situations the Council is engaged with.

The ACT Group also encourages the President of the General Assembly to assess today's debate and continue transmitting a summary of the recommendations expressed by the Membership to the President of the Council for the subsequent consideration, and action, by the IWG, having in mind that Note 507 encourages the Council President to report back on the suggestions of the UN membership.

In all these efforts, we maintain that the Council works on behalf of the Membership, and the need therefore, for the Council to be genuinely transparent and accountable with that in mind.



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*

The ACT Group looks forward to engaging with all Council members in the drafting process of the 2024 Annual Report.

I thank you.