

Statement by
Mr. Tim Mawe
Deputy Permanent Representative

at the

UN Security Council Open Debate on Working Methods

New York, 23 October 2014

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Madame President,

Ireland commends Argentina for organising today's debate and for its effective chairing of the Informal Working Group on Documentation. The group has been particularly active this past year with the adoption of five Presidential Notes.

Ireland aligns itself with the comprehensive statement delivered by Switzerland on behalf of the 23 members of the ACT group.

Today, Ireland wishes to highlight three key aspects of working methods which we believe are of particular importance to the effectiveness of the Security Council: Sharpening the Council's preventive role; the use of the veto, and strengthening engagement with troop and police contributing countries to peacekeeping operations.

Madame President,

For us, it is clear that **the Council needs to enhance its preventive capacities** and needs to be alerted as early as possible to potential crises, so that appropriate action can be taken. Current experience reveals a Council that frequently finds itself responding to crises in an incremental manner, escalating the tools at its disposal as situations deteriorate. Better outcomes can be achieved where the Council's tools are utilized much earlier.

There have been a number of practical initiatives aimed at strengthening the Council's preventive role, including the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention in Africa, the introduction of "horizon-scanning" briefings and, more recently, increased use of informal discussions with the Department of Political Affairs, as well as the use of "Any Other Business" to raise emerging issues of concern.

Ireland welcomes these initiatives as well as the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2171 on 21 August which strengthens existing *acquis* on the Council's preventive role.

But more needs to be done to develop a genuine "culture of prevention". Innovative formats such as Arria formula meetings can trigger fresh thinking on the dynamics to a conflict and inform the necessary response. We saw this recently in the case of the Central African

Republic and we welcome the growing transparency and interactivity by the Council in holding these meetings.

We also welcome the suggestion by former High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, at the August open debate on conflict prevention that her successor would regularly and routinely provide an informal briefing to Council members on situations of concern in order to strengthen early warning.

Madame President,

Ireland believes that the **unfettered use of veto rights by Permanent Council members inhibits the effectiveness of the Council** and needs to be reconsidered. The veto is not and cannot be viewed as a privilege but rather it brings particular duties and a special responsibility to resolve conflict.

Ireland welcomes the initiative by France for a voluntary code of conduct on the use of the veto in mass atrocity situations. Ireland encourages Permanent Members to agree to a Statement of Principles on a voluntary code of conduct by the 70th anniversary of the UN next year.

Finally, Madame President, as a significant peacekeeping troop contributor, we are strongly of the view that **a dynamic, interactive and meaningful partnership between Council members, the Secretariat and TCCs / PCCs is of benefit to all**. Presidential Note 630 adopted this time last year joined a substantial existing *acquis* on peacekeeping working methods which go a significant way to enhancing the quality of the interaction and consultation with troop and police contributors.

The main challenge now is implementation and we commend efforts which seek to strengthen this triangular relationship.

Madame President,

All UN member states have a legitimate stake in how the Security Council is run; the Council was established, after all, “to ensure prompt and effective action” on behalf of the full membership.

On conflict prevention, and across a broad range of topics, Ireland, together with the ACT group, will continue to work for constructive and cooperative engagement with Council members. We all have an interest in taking practical steps to improve the way in which the Council does its business and which enhances its effectiveness.

Thank you.