



STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, DURING
THE OPEN DEBATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEASURES SET OUT IN THE NOTE BY THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL [S/2006/507] ON AUGUST 27, 2008

Mr. President,

Thank you for scheduling today's debate on an issue which is of significant importance to all Member States, both within and outside the Council. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you on your presidency of the Council.

While the Charter confers upon the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, Article 24.1 also stipulates that it acts on behalf of all Member States in discharging this responsibility. Accordingly, the Council's working methods have always been of direct, abiding and immediate interest to **all** Member States. This is not only underscored by the interest of many States in today's topic, but also by the fact that issues relating to the Council's working method were identified almost sixty years ago. It was in April 1949 that the General Assembly unanimously adopted Resolution 267 (III) on this issue—which regrettably remains unimplemented. However, its adoption underlines that such criticism has substantial precedent. An equally illustrious pedigree is shared by the Council's rules of procedure, which have adamantly remained "provisional" over the decades.

While we are happy to discuss the Council's working methods in an Open Debate in this Council, I must emphasize that this is an issue that transcends the limited membership of this body. The extent of interest among non-Council Members and the fact that the Council acts on behalf of the larger membership reinforce the point that the General Assembly has a legitimate role in deliberating upon the working methods of this Council.

Nonetheless, Mr. President, the very fact that we are debating this issue here reflects recognition of the existence of a problem. Indeed, the Note of July 19, 2006 [S/2006/507] of the President of the Council voiced some of these concerns by listing some 63 action points. While the concept note for this meeting assessed the implementation of these measures, we do not fully share its

somewhat optimistic conclusions. Troop Contributing Countries have also long sought to be involved in decision-making in peacekeeping operations, rather than being consulted in a proforma manner. Concerns persist over access to information and documentation, the absence of access to the Council on particular issues as a matter of routine for both the country concerned and important stakeholders, as well as the lack of systematic access, including by island and small states, to subordinate bodies of the Council. All of these are recognized to be amongst the problems besetting the Council. While I shall not dwell on problems in the Council's working methods through a recitation of various examples—the statement of the Distinguished Chair of NAM adequately covers the salient points—there can be no ignoring the growing chorus of voices that recognize flaws in the Council's working methods.

Yet, the many flaws in the Council's working methods are only symptoms of a deeper malaise that lies in its structure and composition. The problem of the Council is not only a problem of working methods but of additional requirement of logistical, defence and financial capabilities and of reinforced legitimacy leading to wider acceptance and more effective implementation of optimal decisions. Thus, the lacunae in the working methods of the Council cannot be rectified fundamentally without an equally comprehensive reform and expansion of the membership of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories. And in this sense we endorse the point made by South Africa and other countries.

It is sometimes argued we could consider reform of the working methods of the Council as an end in and of itself. However, in the real world, achieving a genuine, lasting and necessary improvement in the working methods of the Council cannot be divorced from an expansion of the number of permanent members. It is necessary to underline this point since we have witnessed an expansion in the number of non-permanent members earlier, with little improvement in the working methods of the Council. To acknowledge this is not to denigrate the conscientious and strenuous efforts of many non-permanent members in the past. However, their efforts were always doomed to fail because the structure of the Council had not changed. Not the least of the limitations was the fact that, by their very nature, non permanent members are transient and lack the necessary institutional memory to follow through and implement far reaching changes. The challenge of being new members on the Council also adds to this problem. The very fact that today the arguments that have been made to improve the working methods are the same as in the past sixty years only reinforces the point.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me reiterate our firm conviction that genuine and lasting improvement of the working methods of the Council can only be possible as part of a comprehensive process of Security Council reform, based on

both reform and expansion of its composition in permanent and non-permanent categories. It is only when there are new permanent members, who are held accountable to the wider membership through an appropriate review mechanism, that there will be a genuine response to the longstanding demand for meaningful and durable changes in the working methods of the Council. In the absence of such a comprehensive reform, a fundamental improvement in the working methods would either escape us as it has for more than sixty years or, even if miraculously achieved, would not last without the institutional memory, continuing commitment and peer example of new permanent members held accountable to the general membership.

I thank you, Mr. President.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)