

HRC33 - Joint Statement on working methods of the HRC

14 September 2016

Mr. President,

I am honoured to make this statement on behalf of 72 countries on the working methods of the Council.

Mr. President,

While the various events organized to mark the 10th anniversary of the Council have reminded us, once again, of the body's many achievements since its establishment in 2006, the recent letter from UNOG DG Mr. Michael Møller also reminded us that we must avoid becoming the victims of our own success. In particular, the letter underlined, that the current workload of the Council is unsustainable *and measures need to be taken from next year on to address these challenges*.

Last year we agreed, with PRST 29/1, on a number of improvements proposed by the Council Bureau. Many States also took actions themselves, by proposing to bi- or tri-ennialise resolutions. We welcome these important steps which, when combined with the effects of earlier cross-regional statements on methods of work, have had a tangible impact.

For example, over the course of 2015, the number of texts fell from 112 to 95 – 15 percent, and the number of panels dropped from 23 to 18, compared to 2014.

However, the first two sessions of 2016 demonstrate that further work is needed if we are to make sustained progress on efficiency and effectiveness, and if we are to be able to respond to the concerns expressed in the Director-General's letter.

Mr President,

With this in mind, we express our appreciation for your ongoing efforts to make our methods of work more efficient, within the framework provided by the Institution Building Package (IBP) and the 5-year review outcome, and thereby more effective and impactful.

We appreciate, in that regard, the set of efficiency proposals made by the Vice President of the Council on behalf of the Bureau, Amb. Karklins, which we hope could lead to some positive results.

We encourage you, Mr. President and the Bureau, to continue your work, in a cooperative and transparent manner, on how to make the Council more effective within the existing institutional framework.

The co-sponsors of this statement continue to believe that the most important steps are those that can be voluntarily taken by States themselves.

With that in mind and without prejudice to the rights of States recognized in the IBP, we reiterate our call for all States to support the following voluntary steps:

- Reconsider the necessity of annualised panel debates.
- Make better use of the other, inter-sessional, work formats such as seminars and round tables.
- Continue to show restraint in resorting to annual resolutions.
- Notify delegations of draft texts before start of the session.
- Shorten the text of resolutions, make them action-oriented, and avoid repetition.
- Minimize unnecessary duplication of initiatives with the General Assembly/Third Committee.
- Take into account the capacity constraints of the Council when launching new or continuing initiatives, and support mobilisation of adequate resources for mandated activities.

Thank you.

Co-Sponsors

1	Albania	30	Italy	59	S. Cyprus
2	Andorra	31	Japan	60	Serbia
3	Australia	32	Kuwait	61	Slovakia
4	Austria	33	Latvia	62	Slovenia
5	Azerbaijan	34	Lebanon	63	Spain
6	Belgium	35	Liechtenstein	64	Sweden
7	Bosnia Herzegovina	36	Lithuania	65	Switzerland
8	Botswana	37	Luxembourg	66	Tunisia
9	Brazil	38	Macedonia	67	Turkey
10	Bulgaria	39	Maldives	68	Ukraine
11	Canada	40	Malta	69	United Kingdom
12	Chile	41	Mexico	70	United States of America
13	Colombia	42	Moldova	71	Uruguay
14	Costa Rica	43	Monaco	72	Yemen
15	Croatia	44	Mongolia		
16	Czech Republic	45	Montenegro		
17	Denmark	46	Morocco		
18	Estonia	47	Netherlands		
19	Fiji	48	New Zealand		
20	Finland	49	Norway		
21	Georgia	50	Panama		
22	Germany	51	Peru		
23	Greece	52	Philippines		
24	Guatemala	53	Poland		
25	Honduras	54	Portugal		
26	Hungary	55	Qatar		
27	Iceland	56	Republic of Korea		
28	Ireland	57	Romania		
29	Israel	58	Rwanda		