

References on the need for veto restraint by the UN Security Council in mass atrocity situations

INTRODUCTION

There have been increasing calls by United Nations (UN) member states for there to be restraint on the use of the veto by the permanent members of the UN Security Council in mass atrocity situations.

French President Francois Hollande increased the visibility of these calls in September 2013 at the 68th opening of the UN General Assembly, when he proposed a “code of conduct” by which permanent members would withhold their right to veto in any mass atrocity situation.

This summary collates references made to restraint on the use of the veto by member states in various UN fora since 2008. During the 29 meetings covered in this summary, 84 states from all regions of the world, representing 44 percent of the total UN membership, have supported the call for restraint on the use of the veto in mass atrocity situations.¹ Liechtenstein was the most vocal supporter, discussing the veto 19 times. Twenty-seven other states discussed the veto five or more times. Among the 25 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group, 23 have individually called for restraint on the use of the veto in various fora, while Liechtenstein, Maldives and Switzerland have delivered a statements on behalf of the entire group.

During the opening of the 70th UN General Assembly the governments of France and Mexico presented a “Political statement on the suspension of the veto in case of mass atrocities,” open to signature by UN member states. As of 23 October, 80 states have signed in

support of the statement.² At the same time, the ACT Group launched a draft “Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.” As of 23 October, 103 states and 1 UN Observer have signed on to the Code of Conduct.³

In total, 123 states, representing 63 percent of total UN membership, have supported the restraint on the veto in mass atrocity situations through their public statements or signatures on the France/Mexico and/or ACT Group initiatives.

MINISTERIAL SIDE-EVENT ON A CODE OF CONDUCT REGARDING SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION AGAINST GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY OR WAR CRIMES

1 October 2015
(28)

Australia, Benin, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Guatemala, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States

For statements from this event, please see the Global Centre’s webpage for UN Security Council [veto reform](#).

MINISTERIAL SIDE-EVENT ON REGULATING THE VETO IN MASS ATROCITY SITUATIONS

30 September 2015 (10)	Czech Republic, France, Guatemala, Indonesia, Liechtenstein, Mexico, the Netherlands, Senegal, Spain and Tunisia
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For statements from this event, please see the Global Centre’s webpage for UN Security Council [veto reform](#).

UN SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING ON THE “SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

8 July 2015 (5)	Chile, France, Lithuania, New Zealand, Spain
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Chile

“We would like to reiterate our call upon those countries that have the right of the veto to refrain from using it in situations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing. Otherwise, the Council is left powerless to defend the values and principles that are the most fundamental for humankind. We urge the Security Council, in particular its permanent members, to assume that responsibility.”

France

“In Syria, crimes against humanity and war crimes are committed every day before our eyes, and the Security Council remains paralyzed. In such critical situations, the Council must be able to respond and assume its responsibilities. It is to that end that France is pushing for the five permanent members to voluntarily commit to renouncing the use of the veto in cases of mass crimes. The use of the veto is not a privilege; it is a responsibility. It is therefore up to the permanent members first of all to show that they are responsible within the framework of the Council.”

Lithuania

“Far too often lack of political will and divisions have stood in the way of decisive action, including on the part of the Council. Let me be clear: restraint in the use of the veto in mass atrocity situations should not remain a

theoretical option. We call on all permanent members of the Council to declare it forthwith.”

New Zealand

“New Zealand deeply regrets that the efforts that we and others made over a considerable period to try to ensure that this commemorative event would be marked by a united Council did not prove possible. While acknowledging the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, since 1945 New Zealand has consistently opposed the veto. New Zealand regrets that despite achieving the support of a majority of Council members, the draft resolution was not adopted because of the exercise of a veto by one of the permanent members. At a commemorative event, it strikes us particularly inappropriate that a veto was used. While it was only one negative vote, the outcome reflects on all of us. It once more demonstrates how we must all find better ways of working to ensure that the Council can reach agreement and act when it should.”

Spain

“Vetoing such an initiative represents two steps backwards in the Organization’s efforts to support progress in terms of the responsibility to protect our citizens and in limiting the use of the veto for atrocity crimes.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE: MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

23 February 2015 (22 states speaking on behalf of 36)	Albania, Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Costa Rica, Estonia, France, Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Maldives (on behalf of the ACT Group), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland
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Albania

“Worse, the use of the veto in such cases betrays the trust of millions of people for whom the United Nations is the only hope. It openly neglects and despises victims. It empowers dictators and other serious human rights offenders, and undermines international efforts to end

impunity. In that respect, Albania reiterates its strong support for the French proposal and the efforts of ACT for a code of conduct on refraining from the use of veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.”

Algeria

“Thirdly, the use of veto power is not compatible with the open societies that we look forward to building, and obviously Algeria welcomes the ideas aimed at limiting its application, as a first step.”

Australia

“We welcome France’s initiative on restraint in use of the veto in situations of mass atrocity, and we encourage further progress on this important initiative. The credibility of the United Nations system depends on its willingness and capacity to protect civilians, particularly women and children who suffer disproportionately in conflict.”

Belgium

“The use of the veto — for example, to block the adoption of resolutions on the situation in Syria — is an unfortunate illustration of the shortfalls of the system and a failure of the Council to shoulder its most fundamental responsibilities. That is why Belgium fully supports France’s initiative in favour of a voluntary abstention of the use of the veto with respect to situations involving atrocity crimes. Belgium hopes that the permanent members of the Security Council will be able to agree on a modus operandi in that respect, which we believe would be an important contribution to the ongoing work on United Nations reform.”

Bosnia and Herzegovina

“My country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, supports the French initiative on a code of conduct for the use of the veto in the Security Council in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. The proposal does not advance a limitation of the Security Council; it is an attempt to overcome the current paralysis, to prevent future deadlocks, and to reclaim the Council’s ability to make decisions that uphold its international responsibility for peace and security.”

Chad

“The sometimes abusive recourse to force and the right of the veto at the Security Council diminishes to zero the efforts of the Council and prevents it from achieving its objectives. The world still remembers the failures of the Organization in resolving the Palestinian issue and in preventing and managing mass crimes, such as in Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzegovina and other more recent examples, such as in Syria.”

Costa Rica

“Costa Rica, first as part of the group of five small nations and now as part of the ACT group, has opposed the use of the veto, especially in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We support the French proposal of a code of conduct on the use of the veto and call on the permanent members to adopt a declaration of principles to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Organization.”

Estonia

“Far too often, history has shown us how the distinct privilege of the veto, or even just the threat of using it, has been abused, leaving the Security Council paralysed and passive on the sidelines in situations where it is most needed. The saddest example of that is the four-year long, ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Syria. Estonia therefore stands by the French proposal to establish a code of conduct on the voluntary restraint on the use of the veto and firmly believes that taking such a step would help the Security Council to live up to its mandate.”

France

“Mass crimes offend the global conscience and the memory of the sentiments that inspired the drafting of the Charter...But France also wishes to help prevent such tragedies. Without waiting for Charter reform, France proposed a restriction on the use of the veto in the Security Council in case of mass atrocities, which would represent a major step. It is our duty to demonstrate the extent to which a permanent seat in the Council is a responsibility rather than a privilege or a manifestation of some longing for status.”

Georgia

“Maintaining international peace and security is central to the Organization, especially the Council. But far too

often, because of the structural deficiencies of the Council, universally recognized principles are blatantly abused. Georgia was most directly and painfully affected by the inability of the United Nations to take decisive action. In the course and aftermath of the August 2008 war, one permanent member of the Security Council and a party to the conflict precluded all meaningful measures to be taken by the Council. We arrived at a paradox. The mandate of the then existing United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia was terminated by a veto, so instead of an increased security presence in the aftermath of a full-fledged war, a vacuum was created in the international security presence. The Syrian and Ukrainian crises are other notorious examples in that mode.”

Guatemala

“When an agreement on proposed reforms seems distant, the permanent members can act boldly and make a commitment to the French proposal to regulate the use of the veto in situations involving mass atrocities. The use of the veto must be limited because it has sometimes blocked the prevention or resolution of conflicts, or even fostered impunity. The five permanent members must always provide detailed reasons and motivations behind the use of the veto. This justification should respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

Indonesia

“While recognizing some strong differences on reform, we believe that there are also some quite workable proposals, such as the French proposal to regulate the use of the veto in situations of crimes against humanity.”

Latvia

“Inaction on the part of the Security Council when mass atrocities are taking place runs counter to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. Since permanent members of the Council are granted a special privilege — the veto power — in order to protect the Charter of the United Nations and the international order, they also bear a special responsibility to ensure that this power is used in the interests of common peace and security. Unfortunately, with respect to recent developments the Council has not lived up to this special responsibility. In the case of Syria, the Council has not been able to stop that State from committing crimes against its own population. It has even failed to authorize the investigation and prosecution of those crimes, blocking

the referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. In the case of Ukraine, it was not able to stop an act of aggression, which triggered the commission of further crimes. These failures have immense human costs. They allow innocent civilians to become victims of the crimes from which the United Nations is committed to protecting them. The international community cannot afford more failures. Latvia therefore supports the French initiative of a voluntary code of conduct regulating the use of the veto when genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity are committed.”

Liechtenstein

“Secondly, the veto — the use of the veto, the threat of the veto and the possibility of the threat of the veto — remains the greatest procedural obstacle to Security Council actions where permanent members have difficulty agreeing on a course of action. The price of such inaction is unacceptably high when we are faced with mass atrocities and thousands of innocent victims. We cannot continue to give greater weight to the opinion of one single permanent member than to the need to save thousands of lives. We therefore reiterate our call to Security Council members not to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities, and to put such a commitment in writing.”

Maldives (on behalf of the ACT Group)

“Thirdly, regarding the use of the veto, the ongoing crisis in Syria has demonstrated the consequences of a Council unable properly to fulfil its responsibilities. ACT invites all members of the Security Council, elected and permanent, to voluntarily commit to refraining from voting against Council action aimed at preventing or ending genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Our Group has been pleased that France, as a permanent member of the Council, has taken up the advocacy of this idea and welcomes the broad and supportive discussion on the proposal. We also support the rapid finalization of a code of conduct, as suggested by France, and will be submitting our suggestions for such a code of conduct soon.”

Mexico

“Mexico believes that the Charter’s institutional arrangements cannot contradict the goals it promotes, and has therefore joined France in developing a code of conduct that would encourage restrictions on using the

veto in situations involving war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide.”

Netherlands

“We have been witness too often to mass atrocities in situations where preventive measures failed. On occasion the Council has been unable to act to address such situations because of the contentious use of the veto. In our view, in those situations the use of the veto by the permanent members of the Council ought to be limited. In that respect, we agree with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of the Maldives, which was very clear. We therefore continue to laud and support the French initiative for a voluntary code of conduct for the five permanent members to abstain from using the veto in such situations.”

New Zealand

“My first point is that the use of the veto or the threat of the veto is the single largest cause of the Security Council being rendered impotent in the face of too many serious international conflicts. Whether we are talking about Syria or the Middle East peace process, the veto’s impact today far exceeds what was envisaged in the United Nations Charter — to the huge detriment of the Council’s effectiveness and credibility. We congratulate France on its initiative on the voluntary retirement of the veto in the case of mass atrocities. We urge the permanent members to use this anniversary year to find a way to make progress. While it is difficult, the future credibility of the Organization depends on it.”

Papua New Guinea

“Furthermore, we support the initiative by France on restraint in the use of the veto in relation to mass atrocities. However, we would further propose that this very important issue be discussed in the General Assembly in order to garner the widest possible support for the initiative from the States Members of the United Nations.”

Slovenia

“It is necessary to continue to adapt Council’s working methods and regulate the use of the veto in actions aimed at preventing or ending the most heinous acts, such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. In that regard, Slovenia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Maldives on

behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group.”

Spain

“We would like to highlight that the use of the veto is one of the most significant obstacles to the practical realization of the purpose of maintaining international peace and security entrusted by the Charter primarily to the Security Council. We are aware that the veto is part of the constituent agreement that lies at the origin of the San Francisco Charter. However, rigidly preserving an arrangement that, as experience has shown, badly needs updating does not resolve the underlying problem — the lack of legitimacy of vetoes of draft resolutions seeking to remedy large-scale killings and open spaces for just and lasting peace solutions. Given this belief, we support the French initiative proposing a code of conduct whereby the five permanent members of the Council would commit to refrain from using the veto in cases where the commission mass atrocities has been proven. We view that proposal, which has also been supported today by New Zealand and which has the advantage of not requiring amendment to the Charter, to be a substantive way of advancing towards the goal of eliminating a privilege whose abuse harms the system and weakens its authority.”

Switzerland

“Switzerland supports France’s initiative to limit the use of veto in the case of mass atrocities. We invite all members of the Security Council — both permanent and non-permanent — to voluntarily to refrain from voting against Council action aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocities.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE: PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

31 January 2015
(2)

Belgium and Netherlands

Belgium

“Finally, let me take this opportunity to reiterate the support of my country for France’s initiative in favour of a voluntary limitation on the use of the veto in cases of mass crimes and on the implementation of the concept of responsibility to protect.”

Netherlands

“We support the French initiative aimed at voluntary restraint in the use of veto by permanent members of the Security Council in situations where mass atrocities are imminent or deemed to be occurring.”

SPECIAL EVENT TO MARK THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU: WHY HAVE WE FAILED IN PREVENTING ATROCITIES?

21 January 2015
(2)

France and Germany

France

“Tragic situations do arise despite early warning and preventive action, crimes against humanity or war crimes are perpetrated before our eyes, while Security Council remains paralyzed by the abusive use of Veto. On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the world summit there is a need to strengthen our commitment to prevent genocide, and that is the reason why France is working on a voluntary code of conduct for the five permanent members to remit the use of veto when such crimes are perpetrated. The use of veto cannot be a privilege, it implies duties and responsibilities and we think it should be used responsibly. When mass atrocities are perpetuated the permanent should refrain from using it.

Our initiative is a pragmatic way to improve the way the Security Council works without resorting to amending the charter. At this stage we continue our consultations with the other permanent members of the council to address their concern.”

Germany

“Taking action requires unity of purpose, too often the United Nations were unable to act because of a blockade in the Security Council, this is why we support the French initiative of a code of conduct limiting the veto power in cases of grave human rights violations or mass atrocities.”

MINISTERIAL SIDE-EVENT ON REGULATING THE VETO IN MASS ATROCITY SITUATIONS

25 September
2014 (32)

Algeria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chile, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, Switzerland

For full statements from this event, please see the Global Centre’s webpage for UN Security Council [veto reform](#).

UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: CONFLICT PREVENTION

21 August 2014
(5)

Australia, France, Mexico, Slovenia, Ukraine

Australia

“In cases of possible mass atrocities, we have a responsibility to protect. It is important that we are not impeded from taking practical action in such scenarios by use of the veto.”

France

“To prevent is to act — a concept to which all States Members of the United Nations committed by adopting the concept of the responsibility to protect in 2005. In that spirit, France made a commitment to limit the abusive use of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council in the case of serious crimes. We again call for the joint approach of the five permanent members. Such an approach, I am glad to say, has been broadly supported by civil society and by many States Members of the Organization. I thank all those that have spoken in favour of such a measure.”

Mexico

“Prevention should also focus on avoiding the commission of any grave crimes of an international nature. Peace cannot be built if perpetrators, regardless of their status, position or rank, are not brought to justice for their crimes. It is therefore essential that the permanent members of the Security Council refrain from resorting to the use of veto in situations where war crimes or crimes against humanity could be or have been committed. Therefore, the Security Council reform process cannot continue to be hijacked by the definition of a single issue. Mexico will continue to support all initiatives that promote the reform of the Council’s working methods.”

Slovenia

“When conflicts cannot be prevented, the Security Council must act promptly to end them. Furthermore, if genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity are threatening or ongoing, it is imperative that the permanent members of the Council not exercise the right of veto to thwart efforts to take the measures necessary to prevent or address such situations.”

Ukraine

“Within the framework of the Organization, we have already started discussions on non-use of the veto in the case of mass atrocities. My delegation welcomes that initiative.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST (DEBATE ON DRAFT RESOLUTION TO REFER THE SITUATION IN SYRIA TO THE ICC)

22 May 2014
(6)

Australia, Chile, France, Jordan,
Luxembourg, Rwanda

Australia

“At the very least, today’s failure underlines the importance of voluntary restraint on the use of the veto in situations where mass atrocities are so clear.”

Chile

“On many occasions Chile has joined those calling on the countries that enjoy the right of veto to refrain from using it in situations involving crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing. We believe that the Security Council should have the ability to act in support of the values and principles that are most fundamental for humankind.”

France

“A veto would cover up all crimes; it would be a veto against justice. It would give new justification to the French proposal to limit the use of the right of the veto in the case of mass atrocities.”

Jordan

“At the same time, we would like to emphasize our support for the French initiative, which is designed to limit the use of the veto when the Security Council is voting on draft resolutions related to the perpetration of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, in order to avoid a repetition of what we have seen today.”

Luxembourg

“Today’s vote has highlighted the impasse the Security Council finds itself in, thanks to the abuse of the right of veto. In that regard, Luxembourg supports France’s proposal that the five permanent members refrain from resorting to the right of veto in cases of mass atrocities, genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. A voluntary code of conduct such as this would help to strengthen the Council’s credibility and, above all, its effectiveness in protecting civilian populations.”

Rwanda

“As co-chair of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect, and given our own history of genocide, Rwanda takes this opportunity to reiterate its call to all permanent members of the Security Council to consider, seriously and carefully, the French proposal of a ‘Code of Conduct’ among themselves, by which they will voluntarily refrain from using the veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. In this context, and pending a meaningful reform of the Security Council, we believe that such Code of Conduct could be a necessary tool to enable this Council to re-embrace the moral values

enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING ON THE PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST GENOCIDE

16 April 2014
(3)

Australia, Chile, France

Australia

“Referral of the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court is long overdue. In this context, France’s proposal for Permanent Members to voluntarily renounce their veto powers in cases of mass atrocity crimes is a very good one. We must give it serious consideration with a view to support.”

Chile

“Chile wishes to reiterates appeal that we made in the General Assembly for countries have the right to veto [UN Security Council Resolutions] to refrain from using it in situations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing, since that detracts from the effectiveness of this Council in upholding the values and principles essential to humanity.”

France

“Tragic situations arise despite early warning and preventive action. Crimes against humanity or war crimes are perpetrated before our very eyes, while the Security Council remains paralysed by the abusive use of the veto. That is why France is working for a voluntary code of conduct for the five permanent members to limit the use of the veto when such crimes are committed.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE: PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

12 February
2014
(6)

Belgium, Liechtenstein, Mexico,
Netherlands, Rwanda, Slovakia

Belgium

“I would like to reiterate the initiative of France on voluntarily restricting the right of the veto when a

situation of a mass crime is recorded — a voluntary approach that does not involve a revision of the Charter of the United Nations. Belgium encourages the other permanent members the Security Council to be open to this.”

Liechtenstein

“We call upon Council members to adopt such a resolution without further delay, thereby fulfilling their responsibility under the Charter. It would be inexcusable to use or threaten the use of the veto against such a draft resolution, aimed at preventing or ending violations of international humanitarian law, many of which may amount to war crimes.”

“We congratulate France on its commitment to develop a code of conduct with a view to restricting the use of the veto. We, along with other States and civil society actors, continue to support that initiative. The veto is both a privilege and a responsibility. It must not be used to prolong and legitimize human suffering.”

Mexico

“Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our support for the French proposal to draft a code of conduct among the five permanent members of the Security Council whereby, when considering allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide, the permanent five will renounce their right to exercise the veto.”

Netherlands

“Furthermore, my Government supports initiatives aimed at voluntary restraint in the use of the veto by the permanent members of the Council in situations of mass atrocities.”

Rwanda

“In the same vein, as Rwanda commemorates this year the twentieth anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi, we urge the five permanent members of the Council to agree on a moral pact of conduct aimed at refraining from using the veto in situations of genocide and other mass atrocities. We thank France for its important initiative in that respect.”

Slovakia

“In conclusion, as a small step for the United Nations but a leap for the Security Council, we commend France for its initiative designed to limit the use of the right of the veto in cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity. We suggest that other members of the Council give serious consideration to that initiative.”

PANEL DISCUSSION “GENOCIDE: A PREVENTABLE CRIME”	
15 January 2014 (3)	France, Liechtenstein, Netherlands

France

“We are all aware of the toll in Syria and still powerless to stop it. In this regard, I would like to confirm the commitment of France to go forward with its initiative on a collective code of conduct of the 5 permanent members of the Security Council not to resort to the veto when it would prevent the protection of civilians from genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.”

Liechtenstein

“It is unconscionable that the narrow national interests of one or more States should prevent the United Nations from taking meaningful action to protect civilian populations. We are working within the ACT group as well as with interested Members of the Council to ensure that the use of the veto no longer constitutes an option in situations involving atrocity crimes. As the guardian of international peace and security, it is essential that those on the Council fulfil their responsibility. A responsibility we have entrusted in them.”

Netherlands

“The courageous initiative by France for a voluntary moratorium in the Security Council on the use of the veto in case of mass atrocities. A growing number of member states echo and support this initiative, including my own country.”

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY INFORMAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT	
21 July 2009 (18)	Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Denmark, Italy, Jamaica, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Switzerland, Timor-Leste
9 August 2010 (0)	
12 July 2011 (1)	Liechtenstein
5 September 2012 (5)	Burundi, Costa Rica, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Rwanda
11 September 2013 (8)	Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, France, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland
8 September 2014 (15)	Albania, Côte d’Ivoire, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain
8 September 2015 (32 states speaking on behalf of 35)	Albania, Belgium, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia (speaking on behalf of Latvia and Lithuania), Finland, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay and Vanuatu
TOTAL	84 references from 55 countries

21 JULY 2009

Bangladesh

“In conclusion, let me underline, that in the event we a stage where the Security Council has to take necessary action, we expect that it fulfills fully its responsibly as entrusted by the entire UN membership, Perhaps, our debate on the Security Council reforms-during its discussion on the 'working methods' and application of

'veto' should take this into account to make R2P more effective.”

Costa Rica and Denmark, Joint Statement

“No country or group of countries should be allowed to interfere or obstruct decisions that impede the implementation of the responsibility to protect, including by veto. We support the Secretary-General's call to refrain from employing the use of veto in situations where there is clear failure to meet responsibility to protect obligations.”

Italy

“Recognizing the special responsibilities of the five permanent members of the Security Council, the SG urges them to refrain from employing or threatening to employ the veto in situations of manifest failure to meet obligations relating to the responsibility to protect and to reach a mutual understanding to that effect.”

Jamaica

“How can we guarantee that the Security Council will refrain from the use of the veto and is not stymied into inaction in future cases where crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity, have occurred, are occurring, or are on the brink of occurring? This is therefore one area where urgent reform of the Security Council is required and around which virtual unanimity exists.”

Lesotho

“I cannot agree more with the Secretary General's call for restraint, in the use of veto by the Security Council in the four crimes constituting the scope of R2P.”

Liechtenstein

“The third pillar therefore clearly excludes any form of unilateral action taken in contravention of the Charter from the application of the R2P concept. It was against this background that the High-Level Panel, in preparing its report to the Secretary-General in preparation of the 2005 World Summit, suggested an agreement that there be no use of the veto in cases involving the responsibility to protect. The S5, of which we are a proud member, have consistently taken up this measure as part of our proposals on working methods since 2006.”

Malaysia

“Since the Secretary General's report alludes to the premise that Chapter VII of the UN Charter should only be invoked only as a last resort, then - providing that all questions relating to R2P have been satisfactorily answered and we are in agreement that R2P should be invoked - it does not make sense that the Security Council can thwart this decision by applying the veto. In this regard, and with the caveat that the R2P has been crystallized in full technicolor, the P5 should be restrained from using the veto.”

Netherlands

“As some have noted before, the Security Council has in the past not always been able to respond to critical situations due to lack of consensus. This may continue to occur in the future, and we will need to continue our efforts to overcome the kind of paralysis that at times has come to haunt the world community. Nonetheless, the endorsement of the Responsibility to Protect does represent a major step ahead. It increases the pressure on the Security Council to optimize its functioning and in fact, it has already led to a discussion about restraining the use of the veto in Responsibility to Protect type situations.”

New Zealand

“To that end, New Zealand believes we should all support the Secretary-General's call for restraint in exercising or threatening the veto. It should never be said that the veto prevented action to deal with genocide, ethnic cleansing, widespread crimes against humanity or war crimes.”

Republic of Korea

“In this context, we support the recommendation of the Secretary-General's report for the P5 to refrain from employing the veto, or the threat of veto, in situations of manifest failure to meet R2P obligations.”

Rwanda

“We are cognizant that aspects of R2P require further elaboration. The critical issue of the use of the veto in cases of Genocide, which we firmly believe should be abolished.”

Singapore

“Hence, if we, the General Assembly, imbue the Security Council with the power to invoke R2P to justify action, the Council must also commit to exercising fully this grave responsibility. And they must do so without fear or favour. At the very least, this would entail the P5 refraining from using the veto in relation to the four crimes.”

Slovenia

“We join those who call upon the Security Council permanent members to refrain from the use of veto in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

South Africa

“Let us not forget, that the deplorable system of Apartheid in South Africa was declared a crime against humanity by the General Assembly, which is one of the four crimes identified in R2P; and yet the question of South Africa attracted 3 simultaneous vetoes every time it was put to the vote in the Security Council. In addition, history is also strewn with examples of the abuse of the Council's power or that of one or two individual powerful states over weaker ones - misusing the concept in order to justify unilateral military action and flagrant abuse of military might in lieu of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. This abuse and failure illustrates the tension that exists between our responsibility as international community to protect the people we represent, and that of our sovereign rights as states. This is why our delegation agrees with the Secretary General that the General Assembly needs to develop guidelines for response, including the curtailment of the veto when considering issues relating to these four crimes and enhancing the capacity of the UN to respond decisively and timeously.”

Solomon Islands

“We must also examine the responsibility to protect in the light of recently established bodies, including the Peacebuilding Commission, and of Security Council reform, in particular in relation to the non-use of vetoes by permanent members when discussing the four international crimes.”

Switzerland

“One important means of remedying this would be for the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from using their veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes.”

Timor-Leste

“Timor-Leste unequivocally supports and joins the Secretary-General's appeal to the Security Council to refrain from employing or threatening to employ the veto in situations where there is clear failure to meet obligations relating to the responsibility to protect and to reach a mutual understanding to that effect. No country or group of countries should be allowed to interfere with or obstruct decisions that impede the implementation of R2P. The Security Council has a moral and legal responsibility to give special attention to unfolding genocide and other high-visibility crimes relating to R2P.”

12 JULY 2011

Liechtenstein

“In this regard, we renew our call on the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from invoking their right to block Council action in case of suspected mass atrocities as covered by the R2P concept.”

5 SEPTEMBER 2012

Burundi

“And the day of which the members of the Security Council will understand that when faced with mass crimes and atrocities, one cannot simply attempt to act in a strategic way or to brandish ones veto, the Responsibility to Protect will become a full-fledged concept.”

Costa Rica

“In conclusion then, may I say that we consider that the Security Council has huge responsibility in the area of Responsibility to Protect. And as we have proposed in the S5 group, the permanent members should refrain

from exercising their veto in decisions intended to prevent or halt genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.”

Liechtenstein

“Against this background, I would also like to echo what my colleague from Singapore has said, in particular, ‘For R2P to become an international norm that can deter impunity and prevent mass atrocities, it cannot be tarnish by suspicions of domestic agendas national self-interest.’ It was a quote from his statement that he was not able to read out in the end. I would also like to recall the initiative that he has mentioned that we put forward as the ‘Small Five Group’ on the prohibition of the use of the veto in cases involving R2P situations and we command this highly to the attention of the Security Council, and of course in particular of the permanent members, who are the veto-holders.”

New Zealand

“All this would, however, have required a willingness to innovate, and to adapt Security Council working methods to the real needs of prevention; action that should have been debated without the threat of a P5 veto – a veto which should never be used in situations involving crimes against humanity (which is why we supported the S5 resolution early this year).”

Rwanda

“We welcome the important contribution by Brazil of the Responsibility While Protecting and share the views expressed by Singapore and others, the S5 particularly, on the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocity crimes.”

Singapore

“My third point is that we need to discuss in particular the use of the veto by Permanent 5 Members in R2P situations.”

11 SEPTEMBER 2013

Costa Rica

“We remember that in the final analysis, accountability is part of prevention, and we also stress on the proposal presented by the Small Five group so that the permanent members of the Security Council would commit to not

exercise their veto when we are in the presence of atrocious crimes.”

Côte d’Ivoire

“Côte d’Ivoire supports the French suggestion calling upon Security Council members not to use the veto when there are R2P crimes involved.”

France

“Lastly, I want to reiterate France’s proposal to develop a code of conduct whereby the permanent members of the Security Council collectively agree to refrain from using their veto with respect to mass crimes, which the responsibility to protect is supposed to prevent.”

Hungary

“The permanent members of the Security Council could very seriously consider voluntarily refraining from exercising the right of veto in cases of mass atrocities and in cases of crimes against humanity.”

Liechtenstein

We second those, and there have been many who have mentioned it this morning, that the Permanent Members of the Security Council could make a very essential contribution to prevention by committing themselves to not using the veto to block action aimed at preventing R2P crimes, and we hope that there will be a concrete follow-up to what we have heard this morning.

Netherlands

“We welcome the suggestion of previous speakers that the use of the veto in the Security Council should be limited especially in the context of mass atrocities.”

Spain

“Now the Security Council has a new opportunity to respond to the recent developments taking action to deter those who commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, and to protect civilians in the Syrian conflict. The situation is urgent. We expect the Security Council will live up to this responsibility and we hope to see progress on the idea that the permanent members of the Security Council would make a commitment to not use the veto in cases of crimes against humanity.”

Switzerland

“ACT countries demand that Security Council members refrain from using the veto when atrocities are committed. We welcome very much the appeal of the Permanent Representative of France in this room to come to a code of conduct to pursue this objective.”

8 SEPTEMBER 2014

Albania

“In this respect Albania supports the French proposal and the efforts of ACT for a “code of conduct” regarding the use of veto in the Security Council in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Indeed, there is real need to seriously reflect and advance on this issue. When countries are confronted with situations of mass atrocity, of grave massive human rights breaches, when states are at risk of experiencing genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing, it is up to the Security Council to act swiftly and resolutely. But when the Council itself proves unable to use its power then both the legitimacy of the credibility of the Council are seriously affected and the will of the international community to protect of human life fails.”

Côte d’Ivoire

“My country supports the idea of a code of conduct aimed at voluntary restraint by the permanent members of the Security Council in exercising their veto power, with regard to the consideration of draft resolutions aimed at putting an end to mass atrocities as identified in the concept of R2P.”

Denmark

“We call upon the Security Council to be consistently guided by R2P and for its permanent members to refrain from blocking Council action that aims to prevent or stop relevant atrocity crimes.”

France

“Finally, we must take action. When mass atrocities are committed, the [Security] Council should not add to the failure to prevent, the cost of inaction. In Syria, four double vetoes did not allow us to take the necessary preventive measures and to end impunity for the

perpetrators of these crimes. That is why France is working with its partners in framing the use of the veto in cases of massive crimes, as part of a voluntary and collective commitment of the permanent members.”

Georgia

“Therefore, based on our own experience and also on the fact that the relevant resolutions aimed at reducing violations related to the R2P have often been blocked at the Security Council, we would like to raise our voice in calling upon to the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council to agree to a voluntary restraint on the use of veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity in order to make R2P implementation more effective and not dissuasive.”

Germany

“Once the situation has become a threat to peace and security it will be dealt with by the Security Council. Unfortunately, we all know the cases where it wasn’t able to act. Germany therefore supports the French initiative of a voluntary code of conduct regulating the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities, genocide and crimes against humanity.”

Liechtenstein

“Council members must be prepared to authorize effective international action to prevent or end atrocities. They must refrain from putting their actual or perceived national interest over the lives of innocent civilians - men, women and children. We therefore continue to support efforts aimed at restricting the use of the veto in such situations, for example through a code of conduct or similar tool. We hope that the relevant efforts can be brought to a successful conclusion before the end of the year.”

Mexico

“We must warn of the United Nations falling into irrelevance. We regret the paralysis that the [Security] Council has faced in regards to the Syrian case. The United Nations has been forced to bear silent witness to bloody massacres and the use of weapons of mass destruction that constitute war crimes in the 21st century. This shameful situation for our Organization leads us to promote the establishment of limits to the use of the veto in situations of genocide or crimes against humanity.”

Montenegro

“Montenegro welcomes the French initiative on a ‘Code of conduct’ on the use of veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. We remain keen in operationalization of this proposal, as we are of the view that it could substantially contribute to future prevention of mass crimes. We firmly believe that, in the spirit of constructiveness, dialogue and high regard for multilateralism, with UN at its center, the solution among the permanent five members will materialize.”

Netherlands

“The recent debate in the [Security Council] on conflict prevention, and the initiative inviting permanent members to consider using their veto in a more restrained matter when it comes to prevention of mass atrocities.”

Peru

“In relation to the way forward for improving international assistance in light of the upcoming ten year anniversary of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, Peru will continue and further its commitment to peacekeeping operations established by the Security Council. However, it seems that without a real reform of the working methods of the Council, in particular those relating the use of veto, the R2P principle would lose its leverage.”

Philippines

“We should also continuously examine and strengthen our institutions, from the domestic level, to regional organizations, and multilateral institutions. Working methods and procedure - including the use of the veto by the Security Council P5 on R2P situations- must continuously be assessed and critiqued.”

Sierra Leone

“Finally Mr. Chairman, this delegation wishes to align itself with the views already expressed by other delegations on the suspension of the veto in cases where there is mass atrocities and genocide.”

Slovenia

“The ICC’s potential could be further strengthened through the improvement of cooperation within the UN

framework, including by refraining from the use of veto in cases of atrocity crimes. Therefore we encourage the P5 to continue deliberations about much needed self-imposed restriction on the veto right.”

Spain

“We support a voluntary restraint of the veto in the Security Council in situations of atrocity crimes. We will be present in the High Level Ministerial Meeting place next 25 September organized by France and Mexico. We hope that this meeting will allow a substantive and constructive debate.”

8 SEPTEMBER 2015

European Union

“The primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security including in preventing atrocity crimes and upholding accountability is essential in this regard. Its failure to act in recent cases is a severe disappointment and unfortunate signal to victims. We therefore call on the members of the Security Council to refrain from voting against a credible resolution on timely and decisive action to end the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, or to atrocity crimes and we welcome the work of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group and France in this regard.”

Albania

“Albania reaffirms its firm position that when resolutions on imminent or ongoing crises involving genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, or ethnic cleansing come before the Security Council, Permanent Members must not obstruct action to protect populations. The catastrophic situation in Syria and its disastrous human consequences are a strident call in this sense.

Further, Albania reiterates its support to the French proposal and the efforts of ACT for a ‘Code of Conduct’ regarding the use of veto in the Security Council in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.”

Belgium

“The Security Council does not seem to be capable to fulfil its responsibility to protect as long as it is at the mercy of the use of the veto by its permanent members. More than ever, Belgium supports the French initiative to limit this right to veto. We also support the Code of Conduct on actions of the Security Council against the crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity developed within the ACT Group. We invite all Member States to express their support for these two initiatives.”

Chile

“Unfortunately, in July exercise of the right of veto prevented the Council from adopting a text on the crime of genocide. We again appeal to the Council members with the right of veto to refrain from exercising it in the case of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. We support the Code of Conduct proposed by the ACT Group for this purpose and hope that many other States will join in this initiative and other complementary ones with the same goal.”

Costa Rica

“Costa Rica urges the permanent members of the Security Council to support the French initiative to voluntarily refrain from using the veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This initiative takes up the ideas that have been set out by our country as a member of the Small Five.”

Croatia

“We welcome the streamlining of R2P into the extremely important reviews this year – on Peace Operations, Peacebuilding Architecture and Women, Peace and Security – and call for due consideration to be given to initiatives urging to refrain from using the veto in the Security Council in situations of genocide and crimes against humanity.”

Czech Republic

“The Czech Republic supports the initiative of France calling upon Permanent Members of the Security Council to voluntarily refrain from using their veto in situation of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

Denmark

“We also see important connections to the initiatives of France and the ACT group on restraining use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities.”

Estonia (also speaking on behalf of Latvia and Lithuania)

“Recalling that the members of the United Nations have conferred on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the permanent members of the Council should refrain from blocking the adoption of a draft resolution that is aimed at ending the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, or at preventing such crimes by using its privilege of veto. Far too often we have witnessed how the privilege of the veto has been abused and left the Council paralyzed. In such critical situations, the Council must be able to respond and assume its responsibilities. Otherwise, the Council is left powerless to defend the values and principles that are the most fundamental for humankind. As stated in the Secretary-General’s report, it is crucial that international community speaks with one voice. Therefore, we welcome and support the complementary work of the ACT Group and the governments of France and Mexico on this issue and express our hope that these initiatives will achieve broad support among the UN membership. Achieving an agreement among the Members of the Security Council to adhere to a ‘code of conduct’, be it on the voluntary restraint on the use of the veto, or on Security Council action in situations of mass atrocity crimes would be truly historic.”

Finland

“In situations and crises where crimes falling under the responsibility to protect are imminent, the Security Council has a special responsibility to act. Too often, however, the Security Council has failed to live up to this responsibility. In this respect I would like to express Finland’s firm support to the initiatives aiming to restrict the use of veto in situations involving mass atrocity crimes.”

France

“Faced with the scope of the challenges, it is essential that the Security Council not remains paralyzed. The veto is not a privilege, it is a responsibility. The Council must be able to respond in particular in situations of mass atrocities, and it must be capable of assuming the

primary mission that falls to it. It is in this context that France proposed a concrete measure, to suspend the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocity. This would mean that the five permanent members would commit to collectively and voluntarily renounce the use of the veto when mass atrocities are observed. This initiative as well as the work carried out by the ACT Group is broadly supported by member States and civil society, which proves the relevance. I would also like to note that the Secretary-General is highlighting the French initiative in his report on the responsibility to protect by presenting it as a concrete action enabling mass atrocities to be prevented. This can only lend credibility to this initiative around which we hope that we will all be able to unite.”

Ghana

“In our condemnation of atrocity crimes, crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, my delegation calls upon the Permanent Members of the Security Council to exercise good leadership in situations of these grave crimes and refrain from the use of the veto.”

Hungary

“In order to ensure more timely and decisive response by the Security Council, Hungary – as a member of the ACT (Accountability, Coherence, Transparency) Group – has actively participated in elaborating a “Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes”. By endorsing this Code, the given State, who is or who may in the future serve as a member of the Security Council, pledge not to vote against such credible Council resolutions that aim to prevent or end the commission of atrocity crimes. We encourage all Member States to join this initiative and express their support to this Code, which represents a unique chance to not only improve the Security Council’s ability to prevent and respond to atrocities and thus putting the R2P principle into practice, but also an opportunity to preserve the Council’s legitimacy as the guardian of international peace and security.”

Indonesia

“I wish to point out the critical role of the Security Council in preventing the occurrence of atrocities, and in resolving conflicts. Indonesia is very much in line with the assertion of the Secretary General in this year Report, that the growing international acceptance of the responsibility to protect should provide more solid basis for the Council to take action in the face of various

atrocities. Accordingly, I wish to use this opportunity to underline the responsibility of the Security Council in this regard and support the call for Council’s Permanent Member not to use veto rights in the face of potential occurrence of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

Italy

“We also support the initiative to limit the use of veto on such issues.”

Japan

“There is no doubt that the Security Council plays an especially important role in implementing the Responsibility to Protect. And yet, tragedies in recent years demonstrated that the Security Council is not fulfilling its function to prevent or stop atrocities. Syria is a typical case in point. In our view, one of the causes of the inaction of the Security Council is the exercise of the veto power by the Permanent Members. In this regard, France, one of the Permanent Members of the Security Council, has been promoting the idea that all Permanent Members should refrain from using the veto in situations of mass atrocities. The Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group also proposes that neither Permanent nor Non-permanent Members should vote against Security Council resolutions in such cases. These are both important initiatives as part of the efforts by the international community to implement the Responsibility to Protect.”

Liechtenstein

“I would like to address the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. I hope you all have seen a Note Verbale from the Mission of Liechtenstein sent out last week that contains the respective text. The Code of Conduct was elaborated in the context of the ACT Group, a group of 25 Member States from all over the world. I would also like to thank Singapore for pointing out that a number of States have been working on this question for a very long time. But now, for the first time, we have a concrete text on the table and we are looking for your formal support to this initiative. The Code of Conduct is accompanied by an Explanatory Note. Let me point out the most important features:

- (i) The Code does not only seek the commitment of Permanent Members of the Security Council, but applies to any Member of the Security Council,

including any potential future Member. Consequently, the Code is open for support by all Members of the United Nations.

(ii) It contains a general and positive pledge to support Security Council actions against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. An accompanying more specific pledge asks not to vote against credible draft resolutions aimed at ending or preventing such crimes. However, I would like to emphasize that the first and broader pledge is about supporting Council action.

(iii) The Code does not have any particular procedural trigger. Simply the facts on the ground should propel Council Members and all those who sign up for the Code to honour this commitment and to take respective action.

(iv) The Secretary General is also not a trigger in this Code. However, the Secretary General does, and that is highlighted in the Code, play a very important role in bringing situations to the attention of the Security Council and the Secretary General's assessment carries particular weight.

In addition to the Explanatory Note, let me address some questions that have come up in the meantime.

First, our initiative is entirely compatible and complementary to the French/Mexican initiative. Our approach is a slightly broader one since we are asking all UN Member States to commit to the Code, but again, this is entirely complementary. Second, this is not a General Assembly Resolution. It is a commitment by States that want to sign up for it and there is no intention to turn this into a General Assembly resolution."

Luxembourg

"The paralysis of the Council, when populations are threatened with atrocity crimes, runs counter to the Charter. For this reason, we welcome and support the initiative put forward by France so that the permanent members of the Security Council would abstain from using the veto in cases of mass atrocities. And beyond the permanent members of the Security Council, all member States must accept their responsibilities. We therefore encourage all member States to support the Code of Conduct concerning the action of the Security Council against genocide, crimes against humanity or crimes of war, a Code of Conduct drafted by the ACT Group, of which Luxembourg is a member. Our credibility depends on it."

New Zealand

"Today I would like to emphasize the importance of timely and decisive responses, and the role of information flows. One part of this problem is obvious and well-known, the veto, and the effect it has on the ability of the UN Security Council to respond to situations of mass atrocity. We support the Secretary General's call on permanent members to exercise restraint in their use of the veto in situations that include the commission of atrocity crimes."

Mexico

"The paralysis of the Security Council when it comes to war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity is unacceptable. The veto, which some members of the Security Council have, is a responsibility, it is not a privilege. For that reason, and concerned at this situation, Mexico and France, at the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, have proposed to all member States that we mobilize our delegations so that those who hold the veto hold that responsibility with full knowledge of the facts."

Nigeria

"Also as we mark the 70th anniversary of the UN, there is need for a 'Statement of Principle' on veto restraint in mass atrocity situations."

Norway

"We invite all member states of the UN to formally support the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes that has been elaborated in the ACT-group. We also welcome the French initiative that seeks to ensure that the permanent members of the Security Council collectively refrain from exercising veto in cases of mass crimes."

Panama

"We need to promote various initiatives aimed at overcoming the use of the veto in the Security Council which in these cases has limited the immediate and effective response of the United Nations in specific situations and situations which threaten the lives of civilians. We therefore support the initiative to have a Code of Conduct to promote the idea of a more democratic Security Council. And at the same time, Panama has noted with particular attention the efforts

of Mexico and France with regard to the Security Council.”

Peru

“As regards the response of the Security Council to the serious crises today, we believe the Council in fact must reform its methods especially in dealing with the veto. This year, in celebrating the 70th anniversary of the UN, we support the initiatives of France and Mexico, where the permanent members should refrain from right of veto in cases of mass atrocities and we also support the work of ACT and Liechtenstein.”

Poland

“A timely and decisive response remains the biggest challenge. In this context, let me express our appreciation to the delegations of France and Mexico for their initiative to limit the use of veto by permanent members of the Security Council in cases of mass atrocities.”

Singapore

“Small states such as Singapore look to the UN Security Council to live up to its global responsibility to maintain peace and security. We called for a restraint on the use of the veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity before it was fashionable to do so, and were willing to have the General Assembly pronounce itself on this issue.

As we are all aware, some recent initiatives have renewed our attention on this important question. However, we hope that all member states will have the political will to move from rhetoric to action. In our view, those vested with the power to act, i.e. the Permanent Members of the Security Council, must show leadership and unilaterally commit to not use a veto to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.”

Slovenia

“In order to improve the ability of international community to take timely and decisive early action we strongly support the ACT initiative and the French initiative calling upon the Permanent Members of the Security Council to agree to voluntarily refrain from using their veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.”

Spain

“In the Security Council, as a member of the Council at present, we hope to see that the action of the Council will not be stymied in such situations. Member States of the Security Council, permanent or not, must shoulder their responsibilities to protect civilians whose States have not been able to or have not wanted to do so. Spain supports the Code of Conduct of the ACT Group and France and Mexico’s approach to limit the use of the veto which would block the efforts of the Council.”

Sweden

“If prevention fails and conflict occurs, the Security Council must shoulder its responsibility. This is why we have been actively engaged in ACT and firmly stand behind the initiative to restrain and restrict the use of the veto as presented by Liechtenstein earlier this morning.”

Switzerland

“The member States of the ACT Group propose a Code of Conduct which requires that Security Council members, both permanent and elected, should not vote against Council resolutions aimed to prevent or to put an end to genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. As the delegate of Liechtenstein said, the ACT members are currently circulating this Code among the member States and asking them to give it their official support.”

Thailand

“Thailand joins previous distinguished speakers to support the French initiative calling on permanent members of the Security Council to voluntarily refrain from exercising veto rights in situations of genocide and other mass atrocity crimes to prevent the recurrence of tragic loss of innocent lives.”

Turkey

“Turkey hopes that discussions on the responsibility to protect and its application will help us pave the way for restricting the veto power permanent members of the Security Council in matters related to the crimes against humanity and crime of genocide.”

United Kingdom

“I’m therefore proud that the United Kingdom would never vote against a credible draft resolution to prevent or respond to genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. And we call on all Security Council members – present and future – to echo this commitment, as Chile and others have called for just now.”

Uruguay

“As a member of the ACT Group, we support the Code of Conduct and the veto restraint by the P5. We also support the French and Mexican proposal to have voluntary restraint of the use of the veto. When it comes to cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

Vanuatu

“What we need is a UNSC that acts swiftly to prevent genocides. In the past, we have witnessed that the UNSC has been somewhat weak or slow to prevent genocides. What is therefore required urgently is that there needs to be a reform on the working methods of the UNSC. This is timely given that we are currently discussing the UNSC reforms. We noted the positive steps taken by France and the ACT group on the proposed reforms of the veto power exercised by the UNSC.”

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPENING DEBATE	
67 th , 2012 (6)	Liechtenstein, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland
68 th , 2013 (9)	Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovenia
69 th , 2014 (15)	Botswana, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland
70 th , 2015 (22)	Australia, Austria, Botswana, Chile, Estonia, Georgia, Guinea, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New

	Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Romania, Switzerland and Ukraine
TOTAL	30 references from 20 countries

OPENING OF THE 67th SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2012

Liechtenstein

“The stalemate in the Council illustrates that we must look at the way the veto power is and can be used – without questioning its existence. There must be accountability in this respect vis-à-vis the membership of the organization as a whole. After all, the Council carries out its work on behalf of all of us. We call upon the Permanent Members to acknowledge that the UN Charter does not grant them the right to veto without any strings attached. We ask them to acknowledge that the Council must at all times act in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. And we therefore request that they pledge not to use the veto to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.”

Malaysia

“There are so many instances when it [the UN Security Council] has failed to take action when action is needed the most. It has failed to do this due to the veto power conferred to the five permanent members. Thus, time and time again it has become a victim of its own creation.”

New Zealand

“But to ask the P5 to acknowledge and respect the genuine concerns of the wider membership by voluntarily accepting a curb on the exercise of the veto, is an entirely reasonable and achievable objective.”

“And my challenge to them today is to consider a process by which they collectively and voluntarily agree to confine their use of the veto to those issues that clearly and directly affect their vital national interests; and that they voluntarily agree not to use their veto in situations involving mass atrocities.”

Norway

“The permanent members were entrusted with the right to veto. My country’s delegation at the time was led by

OPENING OF THE 68th SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2013

Mr. Trygve Lie, later to become this organization's first Secretary General. On behalf of my country, he cast his vote in favor of the right to veto. So did many other small and medium-sized countries. They did so to reflect the world order of the day, but also to ensure that the Council would actually have the authority to make decisions and to act on our behalf. They did not do so because they held certain states to be superior to others. Therefore, and in light of the Syrian drama, my message to the members of the Security Council is this: People in the Arab world, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa and in the Americas are watching with horror how history repeats itself. Once again, the permanent members of the UN Security Council are divided and unable to protect the people on the ground. In its absence, extremists on all sides are free to kill, maim and rape. Now - we expect you to act. We expect you to put away outdated ideas of zero-sum games and spheres of influence and to strive to seek a common position. Enough blood has been shed. The verdict is harsh on he who chooses the wrong side of history."

Singapore

"The P5, with their veto powers, have the primary responsibility to make the Security Council more effective. This is why Singapore has consistently called for an improvement in the Security Council's working methods. The Security Council is not a rubber stamp for the interests of its individual members. Its power, if not visibly and openly wielded for the greater good and to discharge its mandate in all instances, will eventually undermine its legitimacy and leadership role in the international community. This is in no one's interest."

Switzerland

"The recourse to the right of veto within the Security Council is hard to justify in situations of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. That is why Switzerland, along with other countries, continues to call for a reform of the working methods of the Security Council. Indeed, transparency and collaboration of the latter with other UN organs need to be improved, and the right of veto needs to be limited."

Chile

"And we join in the appeals to countries with the right of veto to refrain from exercising that right in situations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing, since doing so prevents the Council from effectively defending the most fundamental values and principles of mankind."

Costa Rica

"We also call again on the five Permanent Members of the Security Council, to refrain in the future from exercising the veto in cases of crimes against humanity."

Croatia

"The enlargement of the Security Council is closely connected with a reform of its working methods, while the continuation of the veto powers of the P5 continues to raise numerous questions. That is why the reform needs to be a comprehensive one."

France

"That's why I am proposing that a code of good conduct be defined by the permanent members of the Security Council, and that in the event of a mass crime they can decide to collectively renounce their veto powers."

Liechtenstein

"Our inability to respond to the crisis in Syria demonstrates a crucial weakness in the system: the use of the veto, or its threat, in a manner incompatible with the purposes of the United Nations. This can make the Security Council irrelevant at times when it is most urgently needed. During this general debate, the President of France has suggested a common code of conduct for Permanent Members of the Security Council. We strongly agree with this proposal. All five Permanent Members should be able to give the world one public commitment: that they will not use their veto to block action aimed at ending or preventing atrocity crimes. This would be crucial to enhance the Council's effectiveness - and its credibility."

Mexico

“The challenges we face today, compel us to have a Security Council that: Limits the exercise of veto power when faced with genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

Netherlands

“The Netherlands supports the proposal that permanent Security Council members should henceforth refrain from using their vetoes in votes on intervention to stop the mass atrocity crimes identified by the 2005 world summit. They should show they are serious about their responsibility to protect vulnerable populations, underlining our consensus that genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing must never be tolerated.”

New Zealand

“This Organisation would not also have been a powerless bystander to the Syrian tragedy for over two years if the lack of agreement among the Security Council's Permanent Members had not shielded the Assad regime - thereby re-confirming the fears of New Zealand and others who had opposed the veto at the original San Francisco conference in 1945.”

“We now seem to have a practice whereby the Permanent Members can not only block Council actions through the veto. They also appear to have privileged access to information and can stop the Council from meeting if it does not suit their collective purposes. Such behaviours damage the reputation and credibility of the wider Organisation and must be challenged.”

Slovenia

“Decisive progress in Security Council reform is required to improve the efficiency, transparency and accountability of the Council. As part of this effort the permanent members should consider refraining from the use of a veto in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

OPENING OF THE 69th SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2014

Botswana

“It is our sincere hope that going forward, reason and basic human compassion will prevail in Council decisions intended to eliminate threats to international peace and security, as well as foster a global culture of judicial accountability, inclusive governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. In this regard, Botswana welcomes the French initiative regarding voluntary restraint on the use of the veto by the Permanent Members of the Security Council in situations of mass atrocities.”

Central African Republic

“...the Central African Republic supports the initiative taken by France and Mexico for the alleviation of the misuse of the veto in cases of massacres against civilians, war crimes and genocide.”

Chile

“Chile favors a serious debate on the French proposal to limit the right of veto in the case of crimes involving the responsibility to protect.”

Costa Rica

“My country has objected to the use of the veto for obstructing measures seeking to avoid or resolve conflicts. As Costa Ricans we are amazed at the way some permanent members of the Security Council have cited support for the principle of sovereignty in blocking the Council's intervention at a moment when it should have been acting to prevent rivers from turning red with blood. The blood of innocent victims. We reiterate our call to the permanent members to refrain from using the veto, especially in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and mass human rights violations. We therefore welcome the French proposal for a Code of Conduct around the use of the veto.”

Croatia

“With the World Summit in 2005 we have started reforming the UN system. Despite all the progress made, we haven't managed to achieve palpable results in the reform of the Security Council.”

[...]

“In order to maintain the Council's authority, relevance and indispensability in maintaining global peace and security, its reform needs to be comprehensive and without further delays.”

[...]

“Croatia welcomes and supports the initiative for establishing a code of conduct regarding the suspension of the veto use in cases relating to a mass crime.”

Finland

“Unfortunately, the UN Security Council has not been able to uphold its responsibilities neither in Ukraine nor in Syria. We need to reform the Security Council. Finland supports the efforts to restrict the use of veto.”

Holy See

“It is disappointing, that up to now, the international community has been characterized by contradictory voices and even by silence with regard to the conflicts in Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. It is paramount that there be a unity of action for the common good, avoiding the crossfire of vetoes. As His Holiness wrote to the Secretary General on 9 August last, “the most basic understanding of human dignity compels the international community, particularly through the norms and mechanisms of international law, to do all that it can to stop and to prevent further systematic violence against ethnic and religious minorities.”

Iceland

“Recent events have shown that we must reaffirm our commitment to the UN Charter and other legal instruments to safeguard the foundations of a just and peaceful world. This holds particularly true for the UN Security Council. In its role of maintaining international peace and security its compass should be the UN Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law. It should apply the law equally to all parties. The Council needs to become more solution oriented and directly engaged. Its working methods must be improved, especially the application of the veto. Iceland supports the recent French and Mexican led proposal for refraining from the veto in cases of mass atrocities.”

Ireland

“While ultimately, Ireland would like to see the Security Council's veto power abolished, we strongly welcome the initiative of France, supported by Mexico, to better regulate the use of this power by Permanent Members of the Security Council.”

Latvia

“The limited ability of the UN Security Council to address the urgent situations in Syria and Ukraine in a timely manner underlines the need to move forward with the reform of the Council. Latvia supports expansion of the Security Council in both categories of membership. At the same time, the French initiative, aimed at restricting the use of the veto, merits our joint attention.”

Liechtenstein

“We do of course accept the veto as a reality of the Charter - as we did when we joined this organization. But we do not accept that the veto should be used in a manner that contradicts the very purposes of the United Nations. We have witnessed too many such instances in recent times. Change is urgently needed. We therefore look for a commitment from States serving on the Council not to vote against action necessary to prevent or end atrocity crimes. And indeed, we are looking in particular at the Permanent Members to give a clear commitment to this end.”

Mexico

“The world needs a UN where the permanent members of the Security Council refrain themselves from using its veto power in cases of grave violations of International Humanitarian law.”

Montenegro

“I would like to reaffirm Montenegro's strong commitment to the Responsibility to Protect as a matter of national priority. Montenegro welcomes French initiative on a Code of conduct on the use of veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing and remains keen in operationalization of this proposal.”

Netherlands

“The Security Council must be able to act in a crisis. When mass atrocities are being committed somewhere in the world, veto power should be exercised with greater restraint. We salute the French initiative in this regard.”

Slovenia

“We support the French initiative on the voluntary restraint of the use of veto in situations of war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.”

Switzerland

“It is our view that the permanent members ought not to use their veto to block action designed to prevent or put an end to genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes. Switzerland welcomes the French initiative for a voluntary agreement by the five permanent members of the Security Council to restrain their veto power in cases of mass atrocities.”

OPENING OF THE 70th SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2015

Australia

“All states must uphold their responsibility to protect civilians from the most serious international crimes. Security Council members have a particular responsibility to do so. In that context, we welcome proposals to restrain use of the veto where mass atrocity crimes are being committed.”

Austria

“We need a Security Council that is united and can act swiftly. We welcome the efforts to improve the work of the Security Council. We support the initiatives to suspend the use of the veto in case of mass atrocities.”

Botswana

“Horried by the torment visited upon Syrians with appalling impunity by their government, Botswana joined concerned members of the international community in 2013 to petition the Security Council to refer Syria to the International Criminal Court. It is a matter of deep regret that action on this matter

continues to be frustrated by divisions in the UNSC. In light of such challenges, Botswana continues to firmly support the initiative by France calling for the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from using their veto powers in situations involving mass atrocities. The UN which promotes democracy around the globe should itself lead by example. The UN Security Council is not an example of democracy where permanent membership is limited to five countries which further have a veto. There should be no permanent members and no veto at all.”

Chile

“In 2014 and 2015, we have been a non-permanent member of the Security Council. In light of this experience, we wish to reaffirm our belief in the need to reform the Council by increasing the number of its permanent members and reducing the veto, at least in cases of crimes against humanity. Such a reform is necessary, reflecting the considerable progress made in the multilateral system, and would undoubtedly confer greater legitimacy on the most important organ of the United Nations.”

Estonia

“Council members must not vote against actions aimed at preventing and stopping mass atrocity crimes. Therefore, we support the initiatives of Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group and of France and Mexico on the non-use of veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or other atrocity crimes.”

Georgia

“Increasing the role of small states in the Security Council, avoiding the misuse of the veto rights, as well as improving the working methods should be the cornerstone of the reform process.”

Guinea

“Guinea remains convinced of the need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly and to democratize the Security Council. Therefore, we welcome the initiative of France and Mexico for the establishment of the use of veto against mass atrocities.”

Iceland

“Iceland is ready to look at all options for squaring this

circle. Meanwhile, Iceland has stated its support for the initiative by France and Mexico on regulating the veto and for the Code of Conduct on Security Council action against genocide and other crimes against humanity, drafted by the ACT group of states.”

Ireland

“We strongly endorse the Code of Conduct on Security Council action on mass atrocity crimes developed by Liechtenstein and the ACT group, and we support the Declaration by France and Mexico on regulating the use of the veto. Ireland is ready for membership in 2021 of a reformed and more representative Security Council - one that is better equipped to respond to 21st century threats to international peace and security.”

Latvia

“Early action of the UN in situations of concern is crucial. Latvia supports the proposal to voluntarily restrain the use of the veto at the Security Council in situations involving mass atrocity crimes. It also supports a Code of Conduct for any member of the Council not to vote against any action designed to end and prevent mass atrocity crimes.”

Liechtenstein

“We should clearly acknowledge this damage when we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the organization in October. And, as a consequence, commit ourselves to taking decisive action in the future, where needed. To this end, Liechtenstein has led the discussion in the ACT Group, which has resulted in a Code of Conduct on Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.”

Lithuania

“Vetoing a Security Council resolution commemorating the Srebrenica massacre, or a tribunal for the downing of MH17 is unjustifiable and an insult to the memory of the victims. It also raises questions about the relevance in the 21st century of the Security Council as it is today. For the Council to maintain its credibility, the least it can do is put an end to the use of veto in the cases of genocide, atrocity crimes, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Where would we be today had the Council been able to secure proper humanitarian access in Syria? Had it taken measures to stop the use of barrel bombs and ensure accountability for gross human rights violations and abuses? The Security Council failed to do

so, and millions of Syrians had to flee. By protecting the criminals, the four vetoes on Syria resolutions did nothing to resolve the situation. As a result, today we have the largest humanitarian crisis in the world.”

Luxembourg

“The primary responsibility of the maintenance of international peace and security was assigned to the Security Council in order to ensure rapid and effective action of the organization in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The paralysis of the Council when populations are threatened with atrocities, it runs counter to the Charter. Thus we hail and support the initiative of France to encourage Permanent Members of the Security Council to refrain from the use of the veto when faced with mass atrocities. But apart from the Council, all member States must shoulder these responsibilities. They all have a role to play to work towards a decisive action of the Council to prevent or put an end to mass atrocities. We thus encourage all member States to support the Code of Conduct on the activities of the Council against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes which will officially be launched on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the UN. A Code of Conduct which was elaborated by the ACT Group including Luxembourg. This should no longer be merely an abstract principle but most become reality.”

The Netherlands

“The Security Council needs to be able to act more boldly in the face of large-scale atrocities. Greater restraint in the use of vetoes would help. We warmly welcome France's initiative in that regard.”

New Zealand

“That the five Permanent Members of the Council have the veto creates an extraordinary power imbalance. That imbalance is exacerbated by their practices of pre-negotiating outcomes before engaging with the 10 elected members. And of taking no action when one of the five does not agree. This experience has reaffirmed to us that New Zealand was right to oppose the veto when the Charter was being negotiated. It is still our view that the veto is a constraint on the effectiveness of the Council and realizing the aspirations of the United Nations' members. For that reason, New Zealand supports the two proposals being put forward this year – by the A.C.T. Group of countries and by France and Mexico-to limit the use of the veto in mass atrocity

situations. The fact that two Permanent Members are supportive is progress. But part of the problem is also behavioral. The Permanent Members have become used to exercising power and are protective of their privileged position. They presume to control the Council's agenda and to determine its processes.”

Norway

“The permanent members of the Security Council have a particular responsibility. Norway urges all States to join the proposed code of conduct to enable the Security Council to act decisively against mass atrocities. We support the French initiative to suspend the use of veto in such situations. We will also step up our efforts to support UN peacekeeping and the UN's capacity to prevent conflict.”

Papua New Guinea

“We support the initiative to review the use of the veto power in the Security Council, during times of grave humanitarian crisis and mass atrocities.”

Peru

“We must transform the Security Council in its composition and working methods, and the veto in order to make sure that it is representative and effective. Peru has been working in the group ACT to achieve the acceptance of a Code of Conduct to guide the Security Council in acting regarding criminal atrocities.”

Poland

“In this connection, it is crucially important to continue the work on streamlining the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council, the body responsible for protection of international peace. It must be constantly recalled that the privilege of permanent membership is connected with the duty to take active measures to implement UN fundamental goals, as mentioned in Article 1 of the Charter. In recent years, the right to veto led on many occasions to a total stalemate of the Council works on the most important security issues. This is why Poland supports the French proposal to adopt a code of procedure for refraining from a veto in the event when we are confronted with gravest crimes in the sense of international law, including the crime of genocide.”

Romania

“Let me reiterate Romania’s support for the initiative of

France and Mexico to propose a collective and voluntary agreement among the permanent members of the Security Council regarding the non-use of veto when action is needed to prevent, or bring to an end, situations of mass atrocities and war crimes at a large scale.”

Switzerland

“Finally, Switzerland is also convinced that a strong UN is a UN capable of taking action and decisions when international peace and security are under threat. In this regard, we reiterate our longstanding call on Security Council members not to block or vote against any resolution aimed at preventing or putting an end to the commission of genocide, crime against humanity or war crimes.”

Ukraine

“Abuse of the veto right, its usage as a "license to kill" is unacceptable. Collective voice of our Organization should be clear. Ukraine stands for the gradual limitation of the veto right with its further cancellation. Veto power should not become an act of grace and pardon for the crime, which could be used anytime and "pulled off from the sleeve" in order to avoid fair punishment. In this context I welcome the initiative of my French colleague President Hollande, supported by President Pena Nieto of Mexico, on the Political Declaration to restrain from the veto right among the P5 Members in case of mass atrocities.”

UN SECURITY COUNCIL WORKING METHODS OPEN DEBATE	
27 August 2008 (3)	Canada, Egypt, Switzerland
2009	N/A
22 April 2010 (2)	Egypt, Qatar
30 November 2011 (6)	Jordan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Slovenia, Spain
26 November 2012 (8)	France, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland
29 October 2013 (19)	Australia, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mexico, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine

23 October 2014 (30 states, speaking on behalf of 37)	Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Chile, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Estonia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein (on behalf of Costa Rica, Hungary, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands (on behalf of Belgium), New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Rwanda, Sweden (on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway), Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT group), Ukraine, Uruguay
TOTAL	68 references from 38 countries on behalf of 49 countries

27 AUGUST 2008

Canada

“We also strongly believe that the veto has no place in deliberations on situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We urge the five permanent members of the Security Council to commit to voluntary restrictions on its use in those situations.”

Egypt

“It should also be done in order to prevent the veto from being used in cases of proven genocide, crimes against humanity and grave violations of international humanitarian law, as well as in efforts to halt hostilities between warring parties.”

Switzerland

“Here, I should like to recall some of them: reports to the General Assembly on specific subjects, as well as assessment and analysis of the implementation of Council decisions; additional measures aimed at enhancing the equity of standards for the process of listing and de-listing regarding sanctions; non-use of the veto in the event of genocide, crimes against humanity and grave violations of international humanitarian law; and, finally, announcement in the Journal of the United Nations of all meetings of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, including expert-level meetings.”

22 APRIL 2010

Costa Rica

“Finally, it is important to mention a mandated task on which the Security Council still falls short, although it is established in the very Charter of the United Nations. We refer to the submission of special reports to the General Assembly, a tool which could be of use in such situations as the establishment of a new peacekeeping operation or sanctions regime, or the non-action of the Council due to the use of the veto, among others.”

Egypt

“The working methods of the Council will not be improved unless we effectively address the misuse of the veto right, or the threat of use of the veto, in a manner that would rationalize and restrict its use to cases where severe violations of human rights are being committed, including cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and grave violations of international humanitarian law, as well as to the cessation of hostilities between belligerent parties and the election of the Secretary-General. Pending the achievement of this intermediate step towards the complete elimination of the veto, the right of the veto should be granted to all new permanent members joining the Security Council within the enlargement process.”

Qatar

“I will only stress that it is important that the veto not be used to thwart decisions of paramount importance for the maintenance of peace and security and the protection of human beings.”

30 NOVEMBER 2011

Jordan

“We therefore suggest to the permanent members, and we do so most respectfully, to consider refraining, voluntarily, from the use or threat of use of the veto altogether in situations where there are serious allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity and grave breaches of international humanitarian law. The S-5, in offering the content of paragraphs 18 and 19 of its draft resolution, to be presented in due course to the General Assembly pending final consultations, is basing these recommendations on the right accorded to the

General Assembly under Article 10 of the United Nations Charter.”

Liechtenstein

“Secondly, the S-5 suggests three measures on the use of the veto. The Permanent Representative of Jordan has just spoken very eloquently on the use of the veto in situations that involve the most serious crimes under international law. In addition, we believe that, given the Council’s practice of considering that an abstention does not constitute a non-concurring vote, meaning a veto, a new practice could be established that would allow a permanent member to cast a negative vote without giving it the effect of a veto. That additional tool would enable any permanent member to take a clear position on the substance of a text, while making it clear that it does not intend to block the adoption of a proposal.”

New Zealand

“Fourthly, we need to reconsider the existing practice regarding use of the veto. New Zealand’s views on the veto are well known, and they have been consistent since we and others forced a vote on its inclusion in the Charter in 1945. The veto is a truly awesome power. Greater transparency regarding the circumstances in which its holders would contemplate its use and in explaining its actual use would help reassure other States that its holders are wielding that power responsibly. Agreement on an informal code guiding the use of the veto would be a welcome initiative.”

Slovenia

“We urge the permanent members to refrain from the use of the veto in the event of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

Spain

“For example, the following two measures are aimed at limiting the use of the veto: an explanation should be provided for the reasons for resort to the veto, equivalent to an explanation of vote; and resort to the veto should be avoided in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It would not be an obligation to produce a result, but it would be, at the least, an obligation of conduct.”

26 NOVEMBER 2012

France

“Fourthly, as I already pointed out in the open debate convened by Guatemala on 17 October (see S/PV.6849), France supports the permanent members of the Council voluntarily and jointly foregoing the use of the veto in situations under the Council’s consideration in which mass atrocities are being committed and, more generally, which pertain to the responsibility to protect.”

Liechtenstein

“But it is essential that it not be used contrary to the very purposes and principles of the Organization and that a minimum of accountability be provided in this respect. We believe that a code of conduct regarding the use of the veto would be useful, with a clear emphasis on its use in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.”

Malaysia

“Let me reiterate once again that the use of the veto should be prohibited in situations involving genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Singapore

“Let me cite another example. Draft resolution A/66/L.42/Rev.2 had asked the P-5 to consider refraining from vetoing action aimed at preventing genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. That aspect was considered particularly controversial by the P-5, which were affronted by the suggestion that limits be placed on the use of their veto power. That position was shared by all the P-5, even those who fervently support the principle of responsibility to protect. Those permanent members that repeatedly express outrage at what is happening within the Council on issues like Syria are the same ones that blocked A/66/L.42/Rev.2. Trumpeting moral outrage over the Council’s non-action is particularly hypocritical because whatever divisions there may be among the P-5, they are united in having no limits placed on their use or abuse of the veto.”

Slovenia

“We urge the permanent members to refrain from the use of the veto in the event of genocide, crimes against

humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law.”

Spain

“We see no drawback to permanent members of the Security Council committing themselves to the implementation of such measures, especially when these are supported by the vast majority of Member States. Such measures would include explanations of the reasons for using the veto, which is equivalent to explanations of vote, or the waiver of the veto in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Switzerland

“Finally, the question of the veto must be addressed. Switzerland has repeatedly suggested that member States using the veto be obliged to explain their reasons for doing so and to refrain from blocking action in cases of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Such a practice would be perfectly in line with the spirit of the veto, which was conceived as a mechanism to protect vital national interests. We commend France for its offer to take a step in that direction and encourage other permanent members to follow that example.”

29 OCTOBER 2013

Australia

“As a long-standing proponent of limiting the use of the veto — Australia has historically opposed it — we welcome France’s recent call for permanent members to renounce their veto powers voluntarily in instances of mass-atrocity crimes.”

Brazil

“We commend France for presenting a proposal regarding the use of veto. We believe that this is a clear demonstration of the necessity and urgency of considering substantive decisions to update the organ.”

Chile

“Finally, I should like recall the statement made by the President of Chile in the recent general debate of the General Assembly (see A/68/PV.5), in which he joined the calls for the countries that have the veto right to

abstain from using it in situations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing.”

Egypt

“The working methods of the Security Council will not be improved unless we effectively address the use of the veto. In that regard, we note with interest the proposal by President Hollande of France, which was reflected in his statement in the general debate of the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session (see A/68/PV.5): that the permanent members collectively refrain from using the veto in cases of mass atrocities. Let me recall here that Africa is opposed to the veto as a matter of principle. We believe that it should be abolished.”

Estonia

“One of the issues to explore is the veto and its use. Estonia would call on the permanent members of the Council to seriously consider refraining from its use in cases of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity. In that regard, Estonia welcomes the French proposal to define a way the permanent members of the Council could decide to collectively renounce their veto powers in the event of a mass crime.”

France

“Finally, France has proposed that 50 Member States could challenge the Security Council when they believe that a crime on a massive scale has occurred. That would give us the opportunity to consider the terms whereby the five permanent members could initiate and implement the code of conduct on the use of the veto.”

Germany

“We also very much appreciate the proposal made by the French Foreign Minister Fabius to refrain from using the veto in situations of atrocity crimes. During Germany’s recent Council membership, I myself witnessed the deadlock in the Council caused by three double-vetoes, and — more importantly — the terrible consequences they had for the Syrian people. The French proposal is therefore an important initiative by a permanent member of the Council and should contribute to fostering the overall discussion of the reform of the Security Council.”

Hungary

“Last but not least, Hungary appreciates and very much supports the repeated initiatives of France proposing that the permanent members of the Council voluntarily refrain from using their veto power in situations of mass atrocities. Hungary believes that any and every proposal that brings the Council closer to its ultimate *raison d’être* and the fulfilment of its responsibilities in a flawless and predictable manner merits serious consideration.”

Ireland

“Among the points to which Ireland attaches particular importance in the statement delivered on behalf of ACT are, firstly, the welcome we give to a proposal by France that the five permanent members of the Security Council could voluntarily regulate their right to exercise their veto in the case of mass atrocity crimes.”

Liechtenstein

“The Syria crisis also best illustrates that the use of the veto - and the extensive threat of its use - continue to stymie its work. The veto as such is part and parcel of the Charter of the United Nations, which we all have ratified. But it is essential that it not be used contrary to the very purposes and principles contained in that Charter, and that a minimum of accountability be provided in this respect. We have repeatedly called on the permanent members to commit to refraining from the use of the veto in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We welcome the initiative by France to bring this topic to the attention of the international community. Now is the time to make concrete progress towards such a code of conduct. We look forward to discussions among the permanent members on this suggestion and will continue to work through the ACT Group to contribute to its success.”

Luxembourg

“Lastly, we support the proposals and considerations under way for the right of the veto not be used to block a decision by the Council to prevent or halt genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Maldives

“Only a reform of the Council’s structure will truly make this body more representative, transparent, efficient and

legitimate. In the meantime, we welcome the proposal made by France suggesting that the permanent members themselves could voluntarily forego their right to exercise veto in reaction to crimes of mass atrocity.”

Mexico

“Mexico welcomes the recent proposal by France to develop a code of good conduct among the five permanent members of the Council, so that when the Council is considering war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide, the five permanent members collectively renounce their right of veto. We are willing to work together to advance that initiative.”

Rwanda

“For Rwanda, the veto or even the threat of veto calls for all of us to give it due attention. In that regard, we regret the frequent abuse of that privilege and call on the permanent members to refrain from using the veto, particularly in the case of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Singapore

“[L]et us not forget the deep unhappiness in the UN membership and the wider world at the impotency of the Council prior to [resolution 2118] on the face of the violence and atrocities in the crisis in Syria. The use of the veto is the crux of the problem. Singapore therefore reiterates its request for the Permanent Members of the Council to consider refraining from using their vetoes to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. In this regard, we would be interested to learn of the reactions of the other Permanent Members to the proposals by the French President on a ‘code of conduct’ on the use of the veto. Furthermore, we urge the Permanent Members to explain to the General Assembly their reasons for using the veto, or intention to do so, in particular with regard to its consistency with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law. This is particularly pertinent at times when the veto is used to block action intended to maintain international peace and security.”

Slovenia

“In addition, we repeat our call to the permanent members to refrain from the use of the veto in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or serious violations of international humanitarian law.

We welcome France's initiative condemning the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities and encourage the other permanent members of the Council to address the issue seriously and in good faith."

Spain

"I will conclude with on a sensitive question related to the topic of today's debate: the use of the veto. Spain supports the limitation of its use. Specifically, we urge that a practice be introduced whereby the reasons for its use be explained when that occurs. More important still, we advocate for members to refrain from its use in cases of serious crimes such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We therefore welcome the call by France to develop a code of conduct for moving towards that goal. The Council can rest assured that we remain fully ready to contribute to such measures."

Switzerland

"ACT welcomes the proposal made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs for France, Mr. Laurent Fabius, that the five permanent members themselves voluntarily regulate their right to exercise a veto in the case of mass atrocity crimes."

Ukraine

"There is still a number of significant issues to be addressed, among which is the institute of veto in the Security Council. Ukraine supports the necessity of creating conditions leading to the gradual reduction in the use of veto. In this regard we took note with interest of the relevant proposal by France."

23 OCTOBER 2014

Australia

"There is no procedural issue of greater substantive import to the Council's effectiveness and credibility than the constraints around the use of the veto. Australia welcomes France's initiative on restraint in the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocity. This deserves very close attention and ambitious follow-up."

Bosnia-Herzegovina

"One month ago, during the high-level week, Ministers gathered to support the French initiative on the voluntary commitment of the Permanent Five to refrain from using the veto in situations of genocide and mass atrocities. Bosnia and Herzegovina wholeheartedly supports this initiative. At that event, the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Zlatko Lagumdžija, said: "Speaking from the lessons learned in my country — from Tomasic to Srebrenica — the international community needs to introduce a code of conduct in working methods of the Security Council that, through the refraining from the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities, will strengthen the international community's capacity, responsibility and commitment to protecting civilians." In that regard, we also support the work of the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide."

Botswana

"The African position, as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus, is loud and clear. It is inspired by the desire to see the continent take its rightful place among the community of nations in making key global decisions, and proposes expanding both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories of the Council. Furthermore, it views the question of the veto as divisive, exclusive and subject to abuse by the veto-wielding Powers. We therefore welcome the French proposal that calls on permanent members to refrain from the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities. We believe that proposal is genuine and morally appropriate. It must therefore be embraced."

Chile

"We cannot conclude without recalling that the greatest political challenge that we must continue to address is the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. That is why we wish to reiterate in this context that Chile favours a serious debate in the General Assembly on the French proposal to limit the veto in cases of crimes that involve the responsibility to protect, and to strengthen the preventive role Security Council. This is one aspect of the irrevocable commitment of my country to United Nations action and to promoting the protection, dignity and fundamental rights of all people."

Costa Rica

“My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the 23 States members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, and we also align ourselves with the statement to be made later by the representative of Liechtenstein on the International Criminal Court and the use of the veto... As part of the small five group and now the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, Costa Rica has objected to the use of the veto for obstructing measures seeking to avoid or to resolve conflicts. Costa Ricans are amazed at how, by invoking the principle of sovereignty, some permanent members have prevented the Security Council from intervening when it should have acted to save lives. We reiterate our call on the permanent members to refrain from using the veto, especially in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We support the French proposal for the development of a code of conduct regarding the use of the veto and encourage permanent members to adopt a declaration of principles to mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations next year.”

Côte d’Ivoire

“Imagine for a moment if the veto had been used in the case of the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, then today we would be deploring another genocide in Côte d’Ivoire. With that experience, the news of the mass atrocities that we are witnessing now calls on us and obliges us to condemn the Security Council’s inaction in the face of those situations, due mainly to the misuse of the veto. Lest we forget, the right to veto conferred to permanent members of the Security Council is an enormous privilege, which, in our opinion, must yield to the moral imperative of protecting populations against mass atrocities. In that sense, Côte d’Ivoire understands the French initiative to implement a code of conduct to govern the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities. That is why again today, Côte d’Ivoire, expresses its full support for that initiative and will reiterate it whenever it is necessary, just as it did on 25 September, through its Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State His Excellency Charles Koffi Diby, during the ministerial meeting on that issue, co-chaired by France and Mexico, on the margins of the general debate of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. It is clear that the effectiveness of the Council’s working methods will increase significantly with the adoption of such a code of conduct, especially since we have seen the emergence of an encouraging

trend with the adoption of resolutions 2150 (2014), on the prevention of genocide, and 2171 (2014), on conflict prevention. In that regard, my delegation urges the Council to organize more briefings by the Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, as well as by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The importance of that was highlighted in the joint briefing of the Council on South Sudan by Mr. Adama Dieng and Ms. Navi Pillay (see S/PV.7168). In that context, my delegation also supports the horizon-scanning approach of the Department of Political Affairs and any Arria Formula initiative aimed at informing the Security Council on situations where there is a potential risk of mass atrocities. In conclusion, I would like to recall that as the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations approaches, the expectations of people all over the globe are increasingly desperate to see a safer, more peaceful and more just world. The Security Council is on the front lines when it comes to providing answers to such legitimate expectations. That is why we encourage the permanent members of the Council to adopt a declaration of principles for a code of conduct on refraining voluntarily from using the veto in situations involving mass atrocities.”

Egypt

“Egypt has pronounced itself earlier with regard to the important initiatives to regulate the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities, where we expressed our readiness to address any new constructive approach to reform the Security Council within the intergovernmental negotiations, as an integral part of a comprehensive package, in accordance with General Assembly decision 62/557.”

Estonia

“Several attempts to adopt resolutions on an effective international response aimed at ensuring accountability for perpetrators of atrocity crimes have been blocked by permanent members of the Council. Far too often, history has shown us how the privilege of the veto, or even the mere threat of using it, has been abused, leaving the Security Council paralysed and passive on the sidelines, in situations where it is most needed. Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Council’s permanent members are given great power, but also great responsibility to use it in a responsible manner. Today we know that inaction is the biggest challenge to maintaining and restoring peace and that it can ensure that the Council’s legitimacy and credibility quickly fade.

We therefore gladly welcome the French proposal on establishing a code of conduct for voluntary restraint in the use of the veto, and firmly believe that such a step would help the Security Council live up to its mandate.”

France

“In conclusion, I wish to return to a priority issue for French authorities. Three times, the Syrian crisis has highlighted an impasse in which the Security Council has found itself when faced with the excessive use of the right of veto. Two years ago, the President of Republic, Mr. François Hollande, spoke to the General Assembly (see A/67/PV.4) of the need to establish a code of conduct for permanent members of the Council to limit the right of veto. During the ministerial week of the General Assembly, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Laurent Fabius, and his Mexican counterpart convened their peers to discuss our project to persuade the five permanent members of the Security Council to collectively and voluntarily suspend their use of the veto when a situation of mass crimes was under consideration. We need to reflect together on the nature and content of that project, but we will not abandon it. The other permanent members need to commit themselves.”

Germany

“I would like to reiterate the great importance Germany attaches to due process in targeted United Nations sanctions, the role of the ICC and the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council. In that regard, like Italy has just done, we commend the initiatives brought forward by France and Mexico on the use of the veto and by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.”

Indonesia

“Secondly, in relation to the use of veto rights, Indonesia welcomes the initiative for the early commencement of dialogue among the permanent members of the Council on a voluntary code of conduct regarding the use of veto, in particular one in which all permanent members are committed to exercising voluntary restraint on the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities. With clear and agreeable modalities, the code of conduct can help the Security Council arrive at a united voice and live up to its mandate under the Charter, particularly in situations where there are violations of international law, human rights and humanitarian laws relating to acts under the

definition of war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity.”

Ireland

“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 seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, next year.”

Italy

“The veto mechanism is one of the key issues of Security Council reform. The Security Council plays a crucial role in regulating international relations. My country is opposed to any attempt to delegitimize the authority of the Council. At the same time, we are all aware that the current veto system does not reflect today’s reality. Moreover, in some cases it has prevented the Security Council from delivering appropriate responses in cases of mass atrocities. While we are working on a comprehensive solution, something can be done under the current system. We join those who call for a voluntary code of conduct for permanent members of the Council on the use of the veto when taking action to prevent or end mass atrocities. Veto power presumes a clear responsibility to prevent or end the perpetration of atrocity crimes. In that respect, Italy is ready to engage with the rest of the membership in a constructive dialogue leading to an early outcome.”

Kazakhstan

“Thirdly, there is a great divergence of views regarding the right to veto and its application. My country supports the notion that the veto should not be used in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity or serious crimes against international humanitarian law. But to make it practical, we have to bridge fundamental differences in defining our perceptions of the aforementioned concepts of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious crimes against international humanitarian law. My delegation hopes that this issue can be resolved by the permanent members by taking into account all their approaches on the basis of goodwill and compromise.”

Liechtenstein (on behalf of Costa Rica, Hungary, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland)

“Two “no” votes prevented the Council from referring the situation in Syria to the ICC – two “no” votes against 13 votes in favour, with 65 sponsors. We certainly accept the veto as part of the United Nations Charter, which we all ratified, but we do not accept that it be used in a way contrary to the very purposes and principles contained in the Charter. We have repeatedly called on the permanent members to commit to refraining from the use of the veto in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The meeting convened last month by the French and Mexican Foreign Ministers on that subject demonstrated that many Member States share that view. We applaud the French initiative and hope to see more concrete results soon. In our view, a code of conduct should also have a preventive function. It should allow the Council to stop these horrendous crimes from happening in the first place. We also believe that elected members of the Council should sign on to such a code of conduct. They have an equally important obligation not to vote against Council action in situations involving atrocity crimes. For our part, as non-members, we will continue to work through the ACT Group to contribute to the success of that initiative.”

Lithuania

“Lastly, my delegation strongly supports the French initiative on limiting the use of the veto, especially in cases of mass atrocities, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Council’s failure to take action in preventing the worst atrocities and crimes against humanity is erosive to its credibility. The use of the veto should therefore be part and parcel of our future deliberations and, as our Australian colleague said, deserves ambitious follow-up.”

Luxembourg

“The Council must also provide itself with the means to overcome blockages when it comes to preventing mass atrocities. We therefore support the initiative of France proposing a voluntary restriction on the use of the veto power in situations where the most serious crimes are committed or may be committed.”

Malaysia

“Thirdly, Malaysia welcomes the proposal by the French delegation. In that connection, we reaffirm that permanent members of the Council should refrain from resorting to the veto in situations involving genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression.”

Maldives

“The need for democratization and the maintenance of the rule of law at the international level is widely accepted and of paramount importance to the functioning of the core organs of the United Nations. In that spirit, the Maldives continues to advocate for the willing waiver of the right to exercise the veto in cases of mass atrocity crimes. The Maldives commends the proposal made by France to that effect. We encourage all permanent members of the Council to engage with ACT on exploring this issue further. The time is now for finalization of a code of conduct on refraining from the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities.”

Mexico

“The lack of cooperation on the part of States is undoubtedly one of the most serious challenges to the effective performance of the Court. It undermines the system and perpetuates unacceptable impunity for those most serious crimes of paramount international concern. That is why, alongside France, Mexico has clearly and actively supported limitations on the use of the veto on the part of permanent members of the Council in cases of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

Montenegro

“In the context of the responsibility to protect, to which Montenegro is firmly attached, let me also welcome the timely initiative of France on the voluntary restraint in the use of the veto in cases of genocide, mass atrocities and crimes against humanity. That initiative, which Montenegro fully supports, is all the more commendable since it came from a permanent member. My country strongly believes that Council’s ability to effectively respond to situations of mass atrocities should not be held hostage by exercising or threatening the veto. Using veto in the face of mass atrocities, as we have witnessed for example in Syria’s case, has devastating consequences on human lives, livelihoods and basic respect for human rights. It also harms reputation and

credibility of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole. Therefore, we remain very keen to see the idea of the code of conduct materialize, in the spirit of dialogue and constructiveness and in the manner that will ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the solution. We hope that voluntary self-restraint on the use of the veto will open the way for a much-needed and long-overdue comprehensive reform of the Security Council, in order to bring the Council in line with contemporary world realities.”

Netherlands (on behalf of Belgium)

“We are grateful for the various initiatives taken in past years by members of the Council to improve transparency, openness and accountability. We encourage Council members to do even more. Improving the Council’s working methods should be an ongoing process. In that regard, let me highlight our support for the French proposal for restraint in the use of the veto in situations involving mass atrocities. We commend France and Mexico for having organized the excellent high-level meeting during the ministerial week last month. We would like to reiterate our full support for that important proposal.”

New Zealand

“Finally, Madam President, New Zealand has welcomed this year the initiative to pursue a voluntary code of conduct in use of the veto. As New Zealand’s Minister of Foreign Affairs said during the French/Mexican side event in September, we strongly support the initiative, which offers a moderate and pragmatic way of moving beyond the paralysis of the Council on some pressing crises. It would bring us back to something closer to the stated intent of the P5 during Charter discussions in 1945 and we hope that it will be considered constructively by all members.”

Peru

“Secondly, with regard to the much-needed democratization of the Security Council, Peru has steadfastly supported a position of principle whose ultimate purpose is the elimination of the right of the veto. We are aware of the difficulties entailed in doing that, which is why my delegation supports, as a first step, the adoption of a code of conduct whereby the veto would not be used in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity or persistent flagrant violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. In that context Peru, commends the proposal made by France and calls

on other permanent members to work on that basis. We reiterate that without genuine reform of the Council’s working methods in terms of the use of the veto, the Council’s effectiveness will be at risk and highly important principles such as those related to international humanitarian law and the responsibility to protect will remain unprotected.”

Poland

“Finally, let me also stress Poland’s full support for the French proposal to limit the use of veto in the situations of mass atrocities. The initiative is much appreciated especially as it is the first one coming directly from the permanent Council member. We hope that constant progress in the reform process will make the Security Council a stronger and more credible body that will be able to face emerging challenges.”

Rwanda

“But, most importantly, Rwanda believes that there is a need to reform the use of the right to veto, on the basis of the French proposal. Indeed, given the recent history of the Council and its failure in the past, permanent members should discuss and agree on how to refrain from using the veto in cases of mass atrocities.”

Sweden (on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway)

“Finally, in the past few years we have unfortunately seen several examples of inaction on the part of the Council in the face of unspeakable human suffering and mass atrocities. That has led to warranted criticism and a necessary debate about the Council’s role, and more precisely the use of the veto. We would like to commend France for taking up the proposal that the permanent members voluntarily commit to refrain from the use of the veto to block Council action aimed at preventing, or ending, atrocities. We welcome the ministerial meeting held in September on that important topic under the co-chairmanship of France and Mexico. The Nordic countries would like to emphasize the importance of keeping that question high on the agenda with a view to framing a code of conduct that is consistent with the common commitment of United Nations members to halt atrocities.”

Switzerland (on behalf of the ACT group)

“One of the priorities of ACT concerns the use of the veto in the case of mass atrocities. ACT has advocated a use

of the veto consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Our group is therefore pleased that France has taken up an idea that many of us have advocated for years, namely, that the permanent members of the Council should voluntarily commit to refraining from using the veto to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending atrocity crimes. While we believe that a commitment from all members of the Council to that end is appropriate, a special responsibility naturally falls to the permanent members of the Security Council. Even such events as the high-level ministerial event on 25 September have been important milestones. It is now time to make progress towards concrete measures, including the early finalization of a code of conduct that contains a commitment to refraining from the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocities.”

Ukraine

“In other words, it is impossible to effectively address the Council’s working methods without first fixing and then preventing the scenario of one of its permanent members abusing core United Nations values, going unpunished for it, and continuing to occupy a permanent seat in this Chamber as if nothing had happened. That is why we believe that the idea that the status of permanent member does not provide immunity from the obligations under the United Nations Charter should lie at the heart of any concept of the Council reform, including in terms of the working methods. We regard the initiative of France for the permanent members to renounce their veto powers in the event of mass atrocities as an important first step in this direction. We welcome the holding last month in New York of a ministerial meeting on framing the veto and express our readiness to contribute to this discussion. My delegation believes that the elaboration of a proposed code of good conduct for permanent members of the Council should also encompass, besides mentioned genuine commitment to the core values of the United Nations, such vital aspect as prevention of the use of the veto power for aggression.”

Uruguay

“Although all Member States, by adopting the Charter, have decided to accept that the veto is part of the system, despite our positions of principle on the matter, in order to achieve the transparency, accountability and commitment of permanent members with regard to the international community, those vetoes should not only be well founded, but also explained. International peace

and security — one of the three pillars of the Organization — should not be subject to only five member States, particularly in cases of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. That is why we welcome the French proposal to restrict the use of the veto in such cases, and we advocate its quick adoption and implementation, without ever losing sight of our greatest hope, which is the elimination of the veto as an institution.”

¹ The 85 states that have spoken on the veto are: Albania, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Venezuela. Four states, including Austria, Gabon, Ghana and Portugal have not delivered an individual statement on the veto, but have been members of a joint-statement read by another state. Four additional states have spoken on the veto, but did not express support for the French or ACT initiative: China, Russia, United Kingdom and United States.

² The following 80 States are supporting the French/Mexican initiative: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chile, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Vanuatu.

³ The following 102 States have signed the ACT Group’s Code of Conduct: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain,

Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Yemen. The State of Palestine, an Observer to the UN, has also signed.