

Willingness to collaborate and bridge differences for the greater good underpins Security Council negotiations

The United Kingdom remains open to discussions on improving penholding. We welcome these discussions being taken forward shortly within the Informal Working Group on documentation and other procedural matters.

Colleagues, the penholding convention we know today is still relatively new. As mandated missions grew and files became more complex, the current approach evolved to provide efficiency, continuity and predictability.

This flexible and informal approach means that anyone can penhold and there are different ways of doing it. Indeed we have seen many valuable products initiated by elected members, particularly during their presidencies – such as on peacekeeping, WPS, climate security and protection of civilians.

We have also been open to co-penholding to enhance the process and have done so recently with Germany on Sudan and Libya sanctions and with Gabon on UNOCA.

The UK's approach to penholding reflects a deep sense of responsibility for the Council's role of addressing conflict and human suffering through proactive and practical action, and its mandate to address threats to international peace and security.

We strive to balance differing views. To reach consensus the UK has to go against our own national position. For example the fourth 3 month extension of the UNSMIL mandate last month; and the technical rollover of UNITAMS/Sudan mandate in June. The last time a UK-drafted resolution did not reach nine positive votes was in 1976.

Colleagues, the objective of improving working methods is surely for improving better outcomes, including Council products.

What underpins penholding it is what underpins all Council negotiations: the willingness of all of us to collaborate, listen and bridge national positions for the greater good.

But there is another approach pursued by the Russian Federation. Not engaging in negotiations, then tabling alternative texts for a vote, without taking into account the views of most Council members, is not consistent with this spirit of collaboration. Such showdowns are not best practice.

We note that the Russian Federation has initiated texts themselves, on Libya, WPS and on the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. These were not successful because they refused to take account of other views to reach

consensus.

Colleagues, Note 507 – agreed recently in 2017 – sets out helpful guidance for enhancing ‘the full participation of Council members in the preparation of Council documents’.

The UK strives to take a professional, transparent, consensus-based, collaborative approach to enable all stakeholders time to articulate their views. Consulting the host government and the region early is critical for us. For example, the two technical rollovers of AMISOM in 2021 and 2022 ensured African partners and the African Union were ready to engage on a substantive reconfiguration of the mission.

We welcome further suggestions for how the process can be improved further and look forward to constructive discussions in the IWG.

Finally colleagues, it needs no reminding that Russia has convened this discussion today on working methods while their invasion of Ukraine – now six months in – remains in flagrant breach of the UN Charter – the very foundation that underpins everything the Council does and how it functions.