



Introduction to the Work of the Security Council

Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch
Security Council Affairs Division
Department of Political Affairs
United Nations

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Overview

- More than at any other time in its history, the United Nations Security Council is active in addressing increasingly complex and varied threats and challenges to international peace and security.



Outline

- What is the Security Council?
- How does the Security Council operate?
- How does the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD) support the work of the Security Council?
- Reform of the Security Council



The Security Council

- Responsible for maintenance of international peace and security
- One of the six United Nations principal organs (Article 7)
- Guiding principles: The Charter of the United Nations and the Provisional Rules of Procedure
- Organ of limited membership (Article 23)

For more information, visit the SC website: <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>



Composition

- **5 permanent members (P5) (China, France, Russian Federation, UK & US) and 10 non-permanent members (E10) (Article 23)**
- **Non-Permanent Members of the SC (Article 23)**
 - Elected by the GA for two-year term
 - Not eligible for immediate re-election
 - Due regard paid to “equitable geographical distribution” and “contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and to other purposes of the Organization”
- **Distribution of Non-Permanent Seats among Regional Groups**
 - 5 from Africa and Asia
 - 2 from Latin America and the Caribbean
 - 2 from Western Europe
 - 1 from Eastern Europe

With one Arab seat from either African or Asian Group
- **Presidency rotates every month in alphabetical order in English**



Current Composition

P-5: China
 France
 Russia
 United Kingdom
 United States
















2011-12 term: Colombia
 Germany
 India
 Portugal
 South Africa

2012-13 term: Azerbaijan
 Guatemala
 Morocco
 Pakistan
 Togo



SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

As of 1 January 2012

				
CHINA	FRANCE	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES
LI Baodong	Gérard ARAUD	Vitaly CHURKIN	Mark LYALL GRANT	Susan RICE
				
COLOMBIA	GERMANY	INDIA	PORTUGAL	SOUTH AFRICA
Nestor OSORIO	Peter WITTIG	Hardeep Singh PURI	Jose Filipe Moraes CABRAL	Baso SANGQU
				
AZERBAIJAN	GUATEMALA	MOROCCO	PAKISTAN	TOGO
Agshin MEHDYEV	Gert ROSENTHAL	Mohammed LOULICHKI	Abdullah Hussain HAROON	Kodjo MENAN



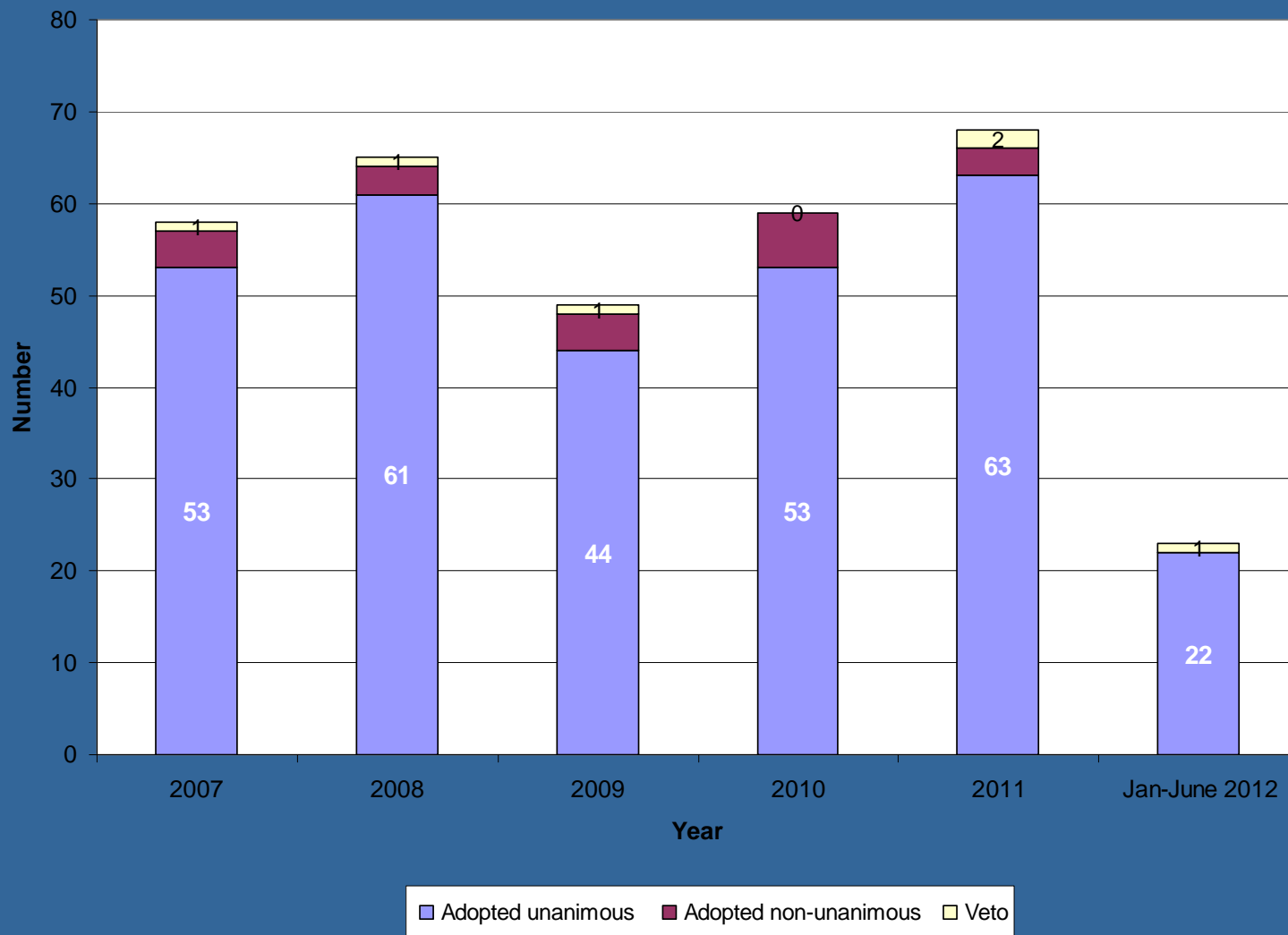
Voting and "Veto"

Article 27

- Each member of the Security Council has one vote.
- Decisions of the Security Council on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members.
- Decisions of the Security Council on all other matters are made by an affirmative vote of 9 members including the concurring votes of the permanent members.
- A party to a dispute shall abstain from voting.



Voting in the Council, 2007-2012





Functions and Powers

Under Article 24 of the Charter:

- Conferred primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the UN Charter
- Acts on behalf of the members of the UN.
- Acts in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN.
- Specific powers laid down in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the Charter.

Under Article 25 of the Charter:

- The members of the UN “agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council”.



Other functions

- To recommend the admission of new members of the Organization (Article 4 (2))
- To recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the SG (Article 97)
- To elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (Rules 40 and 61)



Council actions under Chapter VI

Peaceful settlement of disputes

- To call upon parties to settle a dispute or situation which might lead to international friction through negotiations, mediations and other methods (Article 33)
- To investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction (Article 34)
- To recommend procedures and methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement (Articles 36-38)



UN Peace operations

1. Peacekeeping operations

- Currently **15 operations** deployed and authorized with over 116,000 personnel (incl. 96,000 uniformed) from 119 countries (as of July 2012)
 - ❖ 7 in Africa (MINURSO (Western Sahara), UNMIL (Liberia), UNOCI (Côte d'Ivoire), UNMISS (South Sudan), UNISFA (Abyei), UNAMID (Darfur) and MONUSCO (DRC))
 - ❖ 2 in Europe (UNFICYP (Cyprus), UNMIK (Kosovo))
 - ❖ 3 in Middle East (UNTSO, UNDOF, UNIFIL)
 - ❖ 2 in Asia (UNMOGIP (India/Pakistan); UNMIT (Timor-Leste))
 - ❖ 1 in Americas (MINUSTAH)

2. Political and Peacebuilding Offices

- Currently **13 missions** with approx. 4,400 int'l and local personnel (incl. 447 uniformed) in:
 - Afghanistan (UNAMA), Iraq (UNAMI), Middle East (UNSCO), Lebanon (UNSCOL), Nepal (UNMIN), Central Asia (UNRCCA), Libya (UNSMIL), West Africa (UNOWA), Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), CAR (BINUCA), Burundi (BNUB) and Somalia (UNPOS)



Council actions under Chapter VII

Threats to peace, breach of the peace or acts of aggression

- To determine the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression (Article 39) and to recommend what action should be taken
- To call on Member States to apply sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggressions (Article 41)
- To take collective military action (Article 42)



Council prerogatives under Chapter VIII

Regional Arrangements

- Recognition of the existence of reg. arrangements for dealing with matters related to maintenance of int'l peace and security (Article 52 (1))
- SC's encouragement of peaceful settlement efforts of "local disputes," by reg. arrangements before SC's involvement (Article 52 (2) & (3))
- Utilization of reg. arrangements for enforcement action by SC; no enforcement action by reg. arrangements w/o SC authorization (Article 53)
- Obligation of reg. arrangements to inform SC of its activities for maintenance of int'l peace and security (Article 54)



Programme of Work

Provisional Programme of Work of the Security Council – July 2012 (as of 27 July 2012)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<p>2 <u>Bilaterals</u> (upon request)</p> <p><u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - Middle East (Syria)</p> <hr/> <p><u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - Libya - Middle East 4: 30 P.M. - Coordinators' meeting</p>	<p>3 <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - Programme of work - Sudan/South Sudan</p> <hr/> <p><u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNMISS</p>	<p>4</p> <p><i>UN official holiday</i></p>	<p>5 <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - Peace and security in Africa <u>Briefing (A.M.)</u> - BNUB <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - BNUB</p> <hr/> <p><u>Adoption (P.M.)</u> - UNMISS <u>TCC meeting (P.M.)</u> - UNFICYP</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>1 July</p> <p><i>Iraq Compensation fund report due</i> <i>UNFICYP report due</i></p> <hr/> <p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <p><i>UNMISS mandate expires</i></p>	<p>10 <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - Cyprus - Sudan/South Sudan</p> <hr/> <p><u>TCC meeting (P.M.)</u> - UNOCI - UNSMIS <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - DRC</p>	<p>11 <u>Consultations (11:30 A.M.)</u> - UNSMIS</p> <hr/> <p><u>Briefing (P.M.)</u> - UNOWA <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNOWA</p>	<p>12 <u>Open debate (A.M.)</u> - Post conflict peacebuilding</p> <hr/> <p><i>SG Luncheon</i> <i>UNAMI report due</i></p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p><i>UNAMID report due</i></p>	<p>17 <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - 1701 report - Yemen</p> <hr/> <p><u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNMIK</p>	<p>18 <u>TCC meeting (A.M.)</u> - UNAMID <u>Briefing (11:30 A.M.)</u> - UNSMIL <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - UNSMIL</p> <hr/> <p><u>Briefing (P.M.)</u> - UNOCI <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNOCI</p>	<p>19 <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - UNFICYP - UNSMIS</p> <hr/> <p><u>Briefing (P.M.)</u> - UNAMI <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNAMI - UNSMIS <i>UNFICYP mandate expires</i></p>	<p>20 <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - UNSMIS <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - UNSMIS</p> <hr/> <p><i>UNSMIS mandate expires</i></p>	<p>21</p> <p><i>UNIOGBIS report due</i></p>	<p>22</p> <p><i>Somalia Emergency relief Coordinator report due</i></p>
<p>23</p>	<p>24 <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - Somalia - Somalia/Eritrea 751/1907 Committee</p> <hr/> <p><u>Briefing (P.M.)</u> - UNAMID <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNAMID</p>	<p>25 <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - Somalia - UNAMI <u>Open Debate (A.M.)</u> - Middle East</p>	<p>26 <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - UNOCI <u>Consultations (A.M.)</u> - Sudan/South Sudan</p> <hr/> <p><u>Briefing (P.M.)</u> - UNIOGBIS <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - UNIOGBIS</p>	<p>27</p> <p><i>UNISFA report due</i> <i>UNMIK report due</i></p>	<p>28</p> <p><i>UNAMI mandate expires</i></p>	<p>29</p> <p><i>Somalia Monitoring Group mandate expires</i></p>
<p>30 <u>Consultations (P.M.)</u> - MONUSCO</p> <p><i>End of Presidency reception</i></p>	<p>31 <u>Adoption (A.M.)</u> - UNAMID <i>UNAMID mandate expires</i> <i>UNOCI mandate expires</i></p>	<p>1 August</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>29</p>



Meetings

- **Normally held at HQ**
 - Council Chamber for public meetings
 - Consultations room for consultations
 - Other rooms at UN HQ for unofficial meetings, or at the delegations
- **Recent meetings away from HQ**
 - Addis Ababa, May 2011, jointly with African Union (AU-PSC)
 - Nairobi, Nov. 2004, on Sudan, Somalia and AU
- **Expected to function continuously and interval not to exceed 14 days**



Format of Meetings

Rule 48

Unless it decides otherwise, the SC shall meet in public. Any recommendation to the GA regarding the appointment of the SG shall be discussed and decided at a private meeting.

In practice, the Council can meet in the format of:

- Public meetings
- Private meetings
- Informal consultations
- “Arria-formula” informal meetings
- Informal interactive dialogue

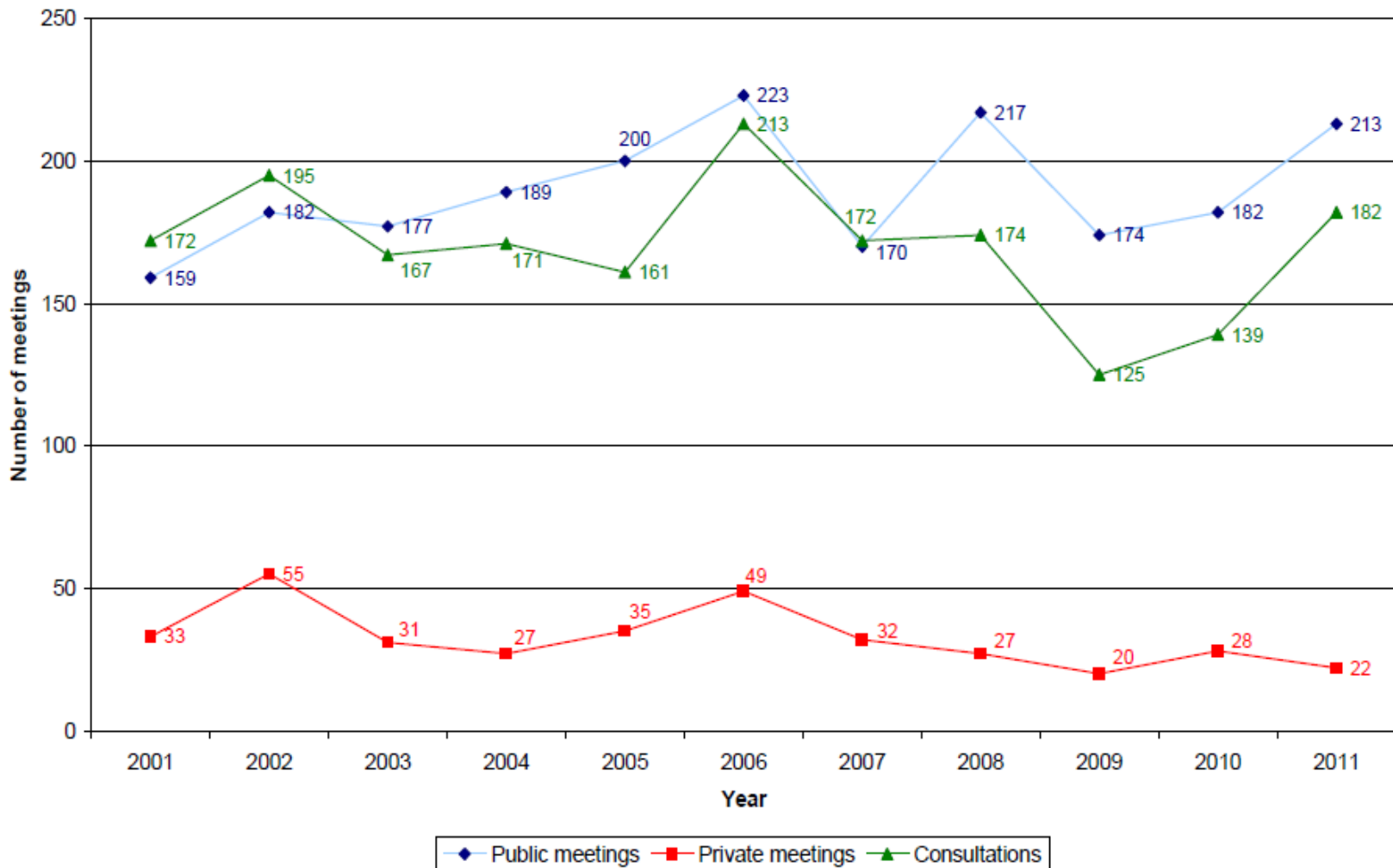


Types of meetings

Names of meetings		Format of meetings	Participation	Briefing by Secretariat	Official records
Meetings of the Security Council	Public Meetings	Open debate	Non-Council members may be invited upon their request	May or may not be conducted	YES Published (Provisional Verbatim Record (S/PV.####) and webcast (www.un.org/webcast))
		Debate	Non-Council members that are directly concerned by the matter under consideration may be invited upon their request	May be conducted	
		Briefing	Only SC members deliver statements following the briefing	Conducted	
		Adoption	Non-Council members may or may not be invited upon their request	Not conducted	
	Private meetings	Private debate	Rules 37 and 39	May be conducted	Communiqué
		TCC meeting	TCCs	May be conducted	
Informal consultations of the Security Council as a whole			Not permitted	May be conducted	NO
“Arria-formula” informal meetings			By invitation only (NGOs mainly)	Not conducted	NO
Informal Interactive Dialogue			By invitation only (Member States)	NO	NO



Statistics of Council activities: Consultations, public and private meeting, 2001-2011



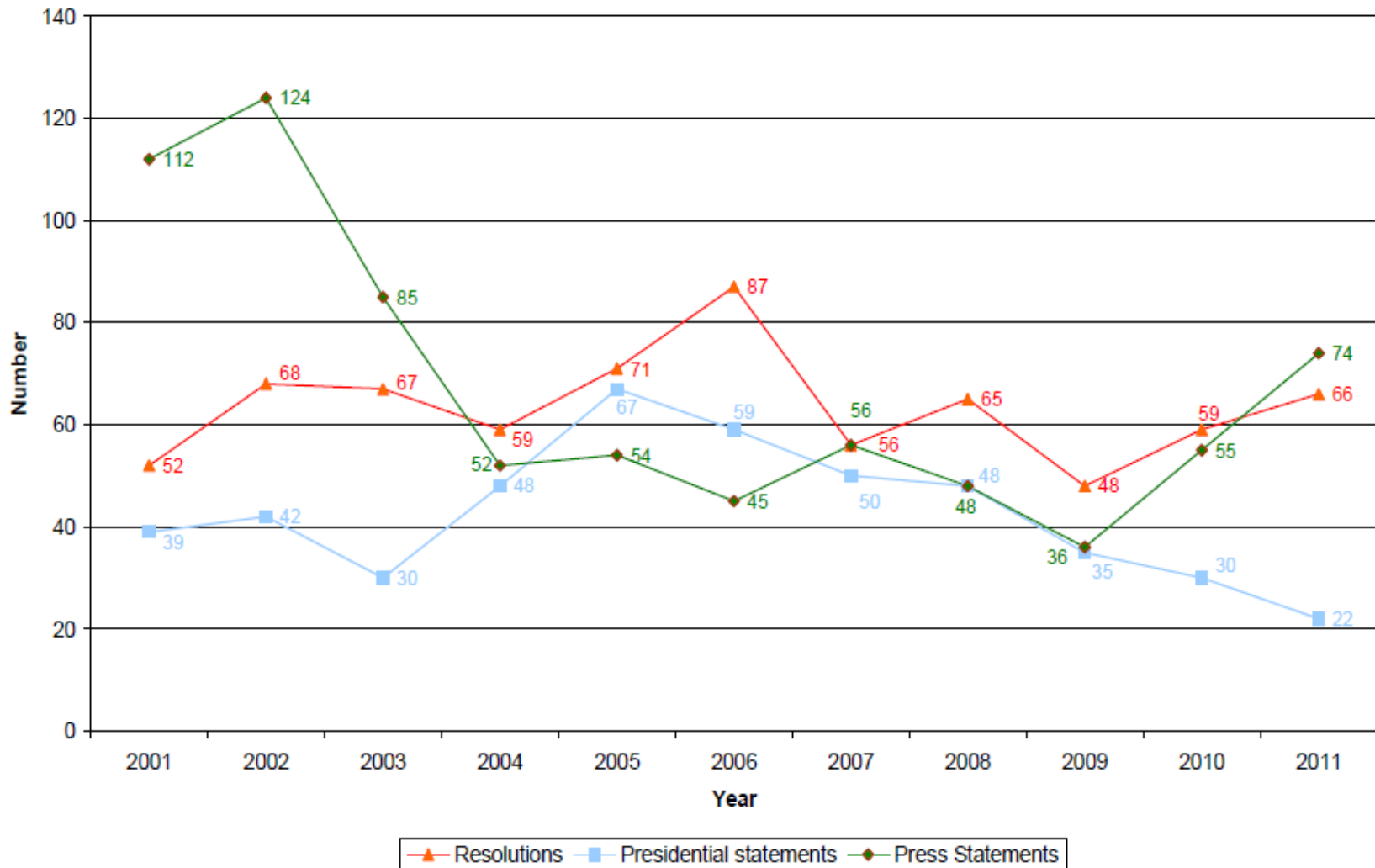


Types of Council Action

Types of action Document symbol	Usual decision procedure
Resolution S/RES/[number] ([year])	An affirmative vote of nine members including the concurrent votes of the P5, pursuant to article 27 of the Charter, in a public meeting (Adoption)
Statement by the President S/PRST/[year]/[number]	Consensus. The President of the Security Council reads out the statement in a public meeting (Adoption)
Note by the President S/[year]/[number]	Consensus (Usually for procedural issues)
Letter from the President S/[year]/[number]	Consensus
Press statement (unofficial document)	Consensus. The President of the Security Council reads out the statement to the press
Remarks to the Press (unofficial)	Consensus. Oral statement by the President.



Statistics of Council activities: Resolutions, PRSTs and press statements, 2001-2011





Agenda

1. Volume

- Since its inception, the Council dealt with a total of approx. 500 agenda items relating to the maintenance of int'l peace and security
- Currently retained agenda items: about 85
- Actively discussed: about 55

2. Nature

- From inter-State conflicts to intra-State conflicts
- Thematic, cross-cutting issues (e.g., women, children, protection of civilians, climate change, cooperation with regional organizations, WMD proliferation)



Agenda (cont'd)

How is a new agenda item introduced?

1. Regional and country-specific situations:

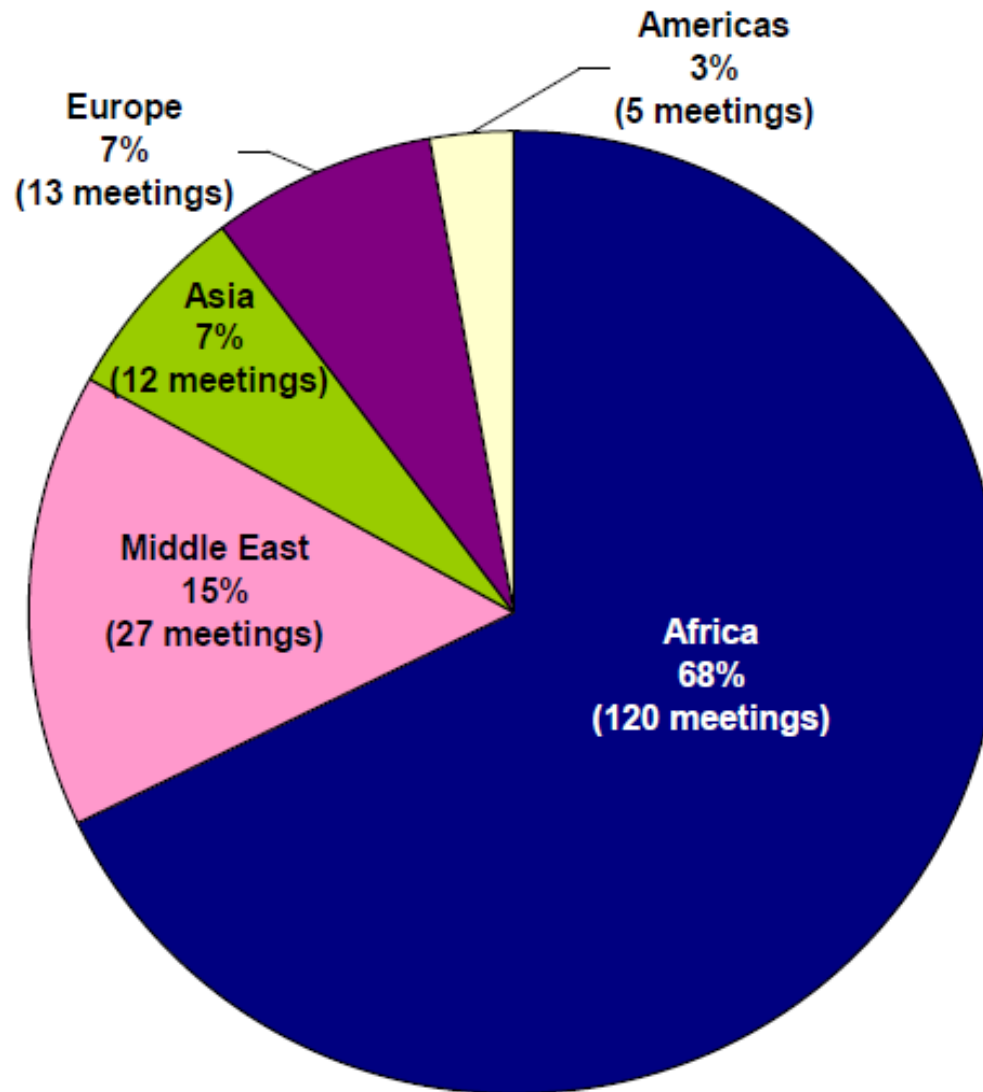
- States (Referral in accordance with Article 35) e.g., 6 Feb. 2011 letter from Cambodia regarding Cambodian-Thai border situation
- The SG
“The SG may bring to the attention of the SC any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of int’l peace and security.” (Article 99)
- The GA
“The GA may call the attention of the SC to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.” (Article 11 (3))

2. Thematic topics:

- Usually by the Presidency
e.g., Impact of climate change by Germany in July 2011, Intercultural dialogue by Lebanon in May 2010



Breakdown of 2011 meetings by agenda item (country-specific/regional situations)





Organization of the Security Council Affairs Division (SCAD)

- The Security Council Affairs Division is the largest Division in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and consists of three Branches:
 - Security Council Secretariat Branch (SCSB)
 - Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch (SCSOB)
 - Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch (SCPCRB)
- A two-member team also supports the Military Staff Committee



Branches of the Division

- SCSB works closely with members of the Council, especially its rotating Presidency, in servicing meetings, processing documents, reporting
- SCSOB supports the work of subsidiary bodies which are established by the Council to assist it in the implementation of its decisions, such as sanctions committees and expert working groups
- SCPCRB is responsible for the preparation of the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, an official publication which covers the evolving practice of the Council on constitutional, procedural and substantive matters



The Council reform debate

- **Five key issues of reform being discussed:**
 - Categories of membership
 - Question of the veto
 - Regional representation
 - Size of an enlarged Council and its Working Methods
 - Relationship between the Council and the General Assembly



Thank you!



UN SECURITY COUNCIL