

31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

**Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) statement (FINAL)**

delivered by Dominique Favre, Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland  
on behalf of the Group

Mr. President,

1. I am pleased to take the floor on behalf of members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group (ACT) Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Uruguay, and Switzerland. We welcome the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly adopted by the Security Council on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and contained in document A/74/2. We thank you for convening today's meeting and the Indonesian presidency of the Council for the month of August for presenting the report.
2. The ACT group promotes a more transparent, effective and efficient United Nations. Promoting meaningful interaction of the Security Council with the General Assembly and greater transparency and accountability regarding the work of the Security Council towards the wider UN membership is a priority of the Group. Against this backdrop, we cannot overemphasize the importance of today's discussion for the institutional relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. As stated in our letter to you dated 24 August 2020, we take note that today's meeting takes place as a "virtual informal meeting" of the General Assembly. While we understand that a formal meeting of the General Assembly is not possible under the present circumstances, today's discussion must uphold the greatest standard of transparency and inclusion. The ACT Group is therefore grateful for your decision to circulate a compilation of statements delivered at this debate, in line with General Assembly resolution 51/241 and with the proposal made by our Group. The present statement will be subsequently circulated to your office.

Mr. President,

3. As we discuss the 2019 Annual report of the Security Council today, the ACT Group would like to address both the process and the substance of the report. We will also look ahead to the Annual report for the year 2020.
4. **First, on the process:** the ACT Group acknowledges the progress made in the timeline of adoption of the report by the Security Council. We commend the Russian Federation for its dedication in steering this process. While a more suitable date for the discussion of the report at the General Assembly could have been found, we deem that this year's process brings a positive momentum ahead of the 2020 Annual report, which will be the first that will have to follow the more precise timeline set out by the Security Council in its Note by the President S/2019/997 of 27 December 2019. As per the aforementioned note, the Annual report 2020 shall be adopted by the Council no later than 30 May 2021 and considered by the General Assembly "immediately thereafter". We look forward to a subsequent discussion at the General Assembly at a date that allows delegations enough time to prepare for the debate.
5. **Second, on the content of the introduction to the report that we are considering today:** The report provides a valuable and factual overview of the work of the Security Council last year. 2019 has indeed been a busy year for the Council and has seen important progress in the field of working methods with the adoption of eight Notes by the President at the end of the year. The ACT Group particularly welcomes these adoptions as well as the progress witnessed in the implementation of some of these Notes since the beginning of this year.

6. While aware of the challenge of reaching consensus on substantive and more analytical language, the ACT Group deems that the introduction to the report would add even more value by addressing some of the trends in the area of international peace and security and the work of the Council, beyond individual files. Contributions by briefers from other UN organs or the civil society as well as those by non-Council members during relevant meetings could also be better reflected. We would also suggest to include details on the draft resolutions that failed to be adopted by the Council. The ACT Group also wishes to underline the importance and encourage the compilation and use of monthly assessments by Council presidencies. These constitute important reference documents to reflect the views of members and to inform the work of the drafter of the Annual report and the deliberations of the Council on the matter.
  7. **Third, looking ahead to the Annual report 2020 and beyond:** 2020 will be marked by the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic both on the functioning of the Security Council as well as on almost all of the items on its agenda. The ACT Group calls on the Council to give due consideration, in the report's introduction, to the impact of the pandemic on international peace and security and the Council's work and tools, possibly through a section of the introduction dedicated to an overall and cross-cutting analysis of the matter. We invite Council members to discuss this option, including in the framework of the Security Council Informal working group on documentation and other procedural questions. We also trust that the Council will give due consideration in the 2020 Annual report to all meetings that have taken place in a virtual format, notwithstanding the fact that they have been labelled as "informal" meetings in the programme of work of the Council since April 2020. The ACT Group looks forward to engage with Niger and other Council members throughout this process.
- 

[SWISS NATIONAL STATEMENT]

Mr President,

To conclude my intervention, allow me to highlight three brief points in my national capacity, while commending again – the Russian Federation for its leadership in coordinating the process this year and achieving progress in the timeline of adoption of the 2019 Annual Report.

**First**, the high number and complexity of conflict situations in 2019 underline the need for a responsive and well-functioning Security Council. We welcome the Council's efforts in 2019 to support peacebuilding and promote sustaining peace. The Council should more actively seek and take into account the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission on relevant contexts under its consideration. The Council should also be responsive to early warning indicators of looming crises and effectively engage with the human rights pillar of the UN.

**Second**, 2019 saw the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Geneva Conventions and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Protection of civilians on the Council's agenda. Switzerland welcomes efforts by Council members to underline the importance of international humanitarian law as well as the adoption of resolution 2474(2019) on missing persons. The Council must nevertheless do more to support the implementation of IHL and the respect for human rights, including in counter-terrorism settings, in line among others with its resolution 2462(2019). When the Council fails to deliver on its responsibility regarding accountability, the General Assembly has an important role to play as Syria and Myanmar show.

**Third**, the two resolutions 2467 and 2493 adopted in 2019 brought some progress on the Women, Peace and Security agenda but also highlighted the need of a more rigorous implementation of the relevant WPS resolutions. The Council should seize the opportunity of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of resolution 1325 to follow-up on WPS obligations and commitments in a more systematic manner, on all relevant country-situations on its agenda.

Thank you.