



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal  
to the United Nations*

**Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization  
of the Work of the General Assembly**  
Thematic Debate on the Role and Authority of the General Assembly

28 March 2024

**ACCOUNTABILITY, COHERENCE & TRANSPARENCY (ACT)**

**Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal  
to the United Nations in New York, Mr. Jorge Aranda,  
on behalf of the ACT Group**

*Check against delivery*

Excellences,

I have the honor to take the floor on behalf of the 27 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Ireland, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and my own country, Portugal.

Thank you for convening today's thematic debate. As a cross-regional group of small and medium-sized member states, ACT engages in the process of the Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly in line with its aim of promoting a more transparent, coherent and efficient United Nations. We express our full support to the Co-Chairs for the programme of work of the AHWG during the seventy-eighth session and thank them for their leadership.



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The ACT Group looks forward to continuing this work together with all member states, following the adoption of resolution 77/335 in 2023. We will make our contribution to strengthening this working group as a platform and tool to promote effective and inclusive multilateralism.

We welcome the focus on the role and authority of the General Assembly in this debate. Allow me to share three observations on our Group's engagement in this process:

First, the ACT Group has consistently stressed the importance of the Annual Report of the Security Council to the General Assembly as an important instrument to strengthen the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

In this regard, we support the consistent organization of an exchange of views on the annual report of the Council prior to drafting of the introduction is needed. We welcome that the UK did so earlier this year and encourage its standardization in the future.

Besides, the summary prepared by the PGA of the General Assembly's debate on the Council's annual report should systematically be considered in the IWG for follow-up by the Council, thus ensuring coordination between the two principal bodies.

On the structure of the report, we call for the addition of a dedicated chapter on the veto, and special reports in the Council's annual report, thereby increasing the transparency of the Council's work and accountability for the use of the veto. Further details on the use of the veto in the introduction of the Report would also contribute to making the text more analytical and substantive.

We continue calling for the timely completion of monthly assessments of each presidency. We recall that monthly assessments are prepared under the responsibility of the presidency, following consultations with members, and therefore can be more analytical and do not require unanimity among Council members.

Second, the authority of the General Assembly also rests on its ability to exercise its role as the main decision-making body of the United Nations, including in peace and security, in accordance with the Charter.



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In the latest Resolution on GA Revitalization, we recognized the functions, powers and role of the General Assembly in matters related to the maintenance of international peace and security, consistent with the Charter.

The General Assembly must be equipped to play this role and we welcome all efforts undertaken to enable it to do so effectively.

In this regard, we encourage all Member States to support the Office of the PGA and contribute with financial resources towards the provision of the digital handbook on past practices, data and recommendations, for the fulfilment of the functions and powers of the GA as outlined in Chapter IV of the Charter – as per the latest Resolution on GA Revitalization.

We also note that in Resolution 77/335 we recalled the Veto Initiative, which provides an opportunity for the General Assembly to play its Charter-mandated role under Chapter IV, when the Security Council fails to fulfill the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security conferred on it by the Membership in Charter Article 24.

Third and finally, we also aim at removing gendered language from the GA Rules and Procedures, to ensure its inclusivity and reflect current realities in the UN. We have made good efforts in the previous session and are ready to continue our engagement with all parties in view of a successful outcome in this new cycle.

The ACT Group looks forward to working with all of you through our contribution to focused and targeted discussions during the upcoming thematic sessions and informal dialogues of the Ad-Hoc Working Group. We remain committed to making a concrete contribution to promoting a more transparent, efficient and coherent United Nations and thereby to a strengthened multilateralism with the United Nations at its core.

I thank you.