Mr. President,

We welcome this timely debate that opens up a space, in the framework of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, to promote an accountable, effective Security Council adapted to today’s world. We would also like to thank the presentations from the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft and the Vice-President of ECOSOC, Mr. Sven Jürgenson, all which expose the current stage of work and interaction between the various organs of the United Nations.

On this occasion I will refer to three issues of particular relevance to the working methods of the Security Council.

First, the use of the veto by those who have that right has on many occasions prevented this body from fully complying with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations. Its use does not foster unity nor does it lead to common understandings and far from defending the collective interest, it obstructs and undermines it.

We are also convinced that it is necessary to take concrete actions in order for the Security Council to be able to prevent and stop the commission of mass atrocities. We believe that as a first step the use of the veto could be limited in the case of these atrocities. We therefore support the Declaration proposed by France and Mexico to restrict the use of the veto, as well as the Code of Conduct on the action of the Security Council against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

However, we must not stop here. We need to remember that where the Security Council has failed the most has been in the implementation of its own decisions and properly following up. It is in the interest of all to ensure the effective compliance with these decisions.

Second, Guatemala is concerned about the increase in the number of letters sent to the Presidency of the Council that seek to justify military action taken in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. While we are aware of the underlying problems that exist in relation to this article, we believe that, within the framework of the working methods of the Council, we must question whether these communications really fulfill with the Charter obligation to "report immediately" all actions that are taken under this provision.
Clearly, most of the time, these letters are sent *ex post facto* as a mere justification of the actions that have already been made. Also questionable is the legality of the “open” format with which they are presented, under the argument that once the communication has been sent all future military action would be justified.

From our point of view, these communications do not exempt the Council of its responsibility to maintain international peace and security in each of these situations. This is why it is imperative to maintain proper control and compliance in the use of this faculty.

**Third,** I would like to refer briefly to the process of selection and election of the next Secretary General. The adoption of resolution 69/321 of the General Assembly serves as an example that it is possible to achieve changes in the anachronistic processes that exist in the Organization and fail to respond to the times we live in. Notwithstanding some progress, Guatemala regrets that there was no agreement on the need for the Security Council to recommend several candidates to the General Assembly, the term of office of the Secretary General and his or her re-election. These issues will be discussed by the Security Council, but it should be recalled that it is for the entire membership to appoint the next Secretary General and therefore the decision must be made jointly.

At this point of deep reviews of many key points of the United Nations system, a critical analysis of the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary General should be a priority. It is time we begin to act and revitalize this process in a judicious manner, recognizing the realities of the present and anticipating the challenges of the future.

Thank you.