

Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) whose work is directly relevant to the SC. DPA, for example, provides briefings to the SC on matters under its consideration. DPKO is responsible for executing SC decisions regarding peace operations.

II INSTRUMENTS AND OUTPUTS

Resolutions:

A resolution is the strongest expression of the SC's will. A resolution generally contains action-oriented decisions, and is binding on UN member states. This is the instrument through which actions are demanded of member states (e.g. cessation of hostilities), sanctions are imposed, peace operations are mandated and the use of force is authorized. A resolution may also register the SC's position on a given issue, without necessarily resulting in concrete action. A resolution is an official, numbered document of the SC.

A resolution is generally negotiated and prepared in informal consultations of the SC (see below). Before the text is agreed, a resolution may circulate for some time as a "white paper". Once agreement in principle has been reached, the Secretariat will prepare a "blue paper" (printed on UN letterhead in blue ink), which is then submitted to a vote in a formal meeting of the Council.

Presidential Statements:

A presidential statement is a negotiated text read out by the Council president at a formal meeting. It is an expression of the SC's views on an issue of substance, but is non-binding on member states. While generally of a hortatory nature, a presidential statement may contain specific directives to member states or instructions to the Secretary-General. A presidential statement is an official Council document.

A presidential statement reflects a negotiated consensus among Council members, and is often the default instrument if the SC is unable to agree on a resolution or chooses not to take more decisive action. Like a resolution, a presidential statement is pre-negotiated in informal consultations.

Statement to the Press by the President of the Council:

This is the weakest form of SC expression. It conveys the Council's general views on an issue, but is generally not negotiated word-by-word. Statements to the press are often the SC's last resort if it cannot agree on more robust measures (e.g. a resolution or presidential statement) but still feels compelled to comment on a particular issue. A statement to the press is often disseminated among SC members and any interested delegations, but is not considered an official SC document.