

#### d) Thematic Debates

Sponsored by the president, thematic debates address cross-cutting security issues, and often result in a presidential statement or resolution. Non-SC members may participate and are entitled to speak.

#### ***Voting:***

Voting takes place in formal meetings of the SC. The procedure for voting is set out in the SC's Provisional Rules of Procedure. Votes in formal meetings can be divided into two general categories; those covering procedural matters (called procedural motions) and those dealing with substantive questions, usually in the form of resolutions. The latter is where the veto of the permanent members applies.

A resolution (also called a proposal in the Rules) can be submitted for a vote by any member of the SC (who becomes the "sponsor"). Non-SC members may also submit resolutions, but they will only be put to a vote at the request of a Council member. A procedural motion or draft resolution may be withdrawn at any time so long as no vote has been taken. If there is more than one sponsor, and the original sponsor decides to withdraw the text, the other sponsors may require that it be put to a vote. A procedural motion or draft resolution almost always consists of several parts which, if a Council member so requests, can be voted on separately, except if the original sponsor objects. Procedural motions require a vote of nine SC members to pass and cover such items as:

- Inclusion of items in the agenda;
- Order of items;
- Deferment of consideration of items;
- Removal of an item from the list of matters of which the SC is seized;
- Suspension and adjournment of a meeting;
- Invitations to participate.

To be carried, substantive decisions (resolutions) require nine votes, including the five concurring votes of the permanent members (the veto). A veto occurs when one or more of the P-5 casts a negative vote in which nine or more members voted in favour. If a member of the P-5 abstains from voting, this does not constitute a veto.

In recent years, there has been a marked decline in the use of the veto. However, even the threat of a potential P-5 veto has enormous influence on Council deliberations. For any resolution to be carried, it is necessary to have the P-5 on board.

It should be noted that votes in formal meetings on substantive items are increasingly rare because of the SC's preference to act on the basis of consensus. If, for example, the SC fails to agree on an item during informal consultations, it is unlikely that the issue will be put to a vote in a formal meeting.