

**United Nations Security Council EEG 2019 election briefing with Estonia.**  
**Eastern European Group**  
**Candidate MS for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council- election debate.**  
**WFUNA.**

Estonia mentioned how they liked the tradition of the debate and the transparency it offers. They feel they have a lot to offer and have vowed to always listen first. Equality is important, they have different sized Member States in the UN but should consider them as equal. "We are all in one boat." Small countries are often evaluated they will try their best. Small countries by definition need coalitions, compromises, co-operations, these are values that are so desperately needed in the security council. They have stated that cyber security and the prevention of it is a major goal of the Mission of Estonia if elected. They want to keep environmental issues as security threats such as water at the forefront of agendas as it is a huge issue for small states, it is a source of conflict and migration. Finally, they have vowed to try and make the security council more efficient and cost efficient. Cooperation and relationships are growing among the security council, they hope to strengthen that even more so if elected.

## **Q&A**

### **Empathy and efficiency**

**Q. The slogan for Estonia is 'efficiency, equality and empathy'. Could you elaborate on the concept of empathy? How do you intend to bring more empathy to the council?**

- Empathy is defined in many different ways. Empathy is an ability to listen, when you listen you start to understand, you have to be able to put yourself in other's shoes. When you see somewhere or someone wronged their problems become yours. As a small country we are more empathetic.

**Q. With regard to effectiveness, the most obvious handicap of the effectiveness of the work of the elected member states is the brevity of the 2-year mandate. Institutional memory and diplomatic staff, when you add to that the size of a small country the handicap becomes bigger. How do you plan to tackle this challenge in order to do less but be more efficient?**

- By the time we learn we are out. Two years is better than one year, but the calendar is better. Elections are in the Summer; the security council report are doing a good job in training members. Finland has organized a meeting of old and new members. Estonian representatives will visit Poland to learn from them, from Belgium and Germany, we have cooperation to work and learn together. Even though the handicap is there we will be ready.

### **Transparency**

**Q. What concrete measures or initiatives if and while on the council do you plan to foster accountability and transparency to the wider UN membership?**

- Slowly improving transparency through more open meetings.
- Even opening curtains is not an easy task to do
- Going to have transparency both ways. Will have regional group briefings and a wider membership.
- The work of security council is result oriented, sometimes it has to be behind closed doors.

**Q. Addressing the trust deficit?**

- Must stick closer together, strengthen our multilateralism.
- Think we will be more successful with 2030 then millennium goals. We will have next development agendas. Optimistic that things will get better for multilateralism. And that UN will exist.

### **Security and Peace keeping**

**Q. A direct link between the SDGs and security was mentioned. The prevention and cyber security campaign outline a stark reality. There is no line in the budget for conflict prevention. The UN budget is decreasing you request doing more with less resources. How do you plan to request more?**

- Right after the candidates' arrival the SDG 2030 agenda was adopted. Thought it would be on the main agenda all the time, but unfortunately, we have to be reminded of it.

- If you fail with water, climate, education, etc. all are potential contributors to conflict and dangers to security, they go hand in hand we need to work strongly with all of them.
- When Estonia became a donor, they were still so small (1.7mil) e-governments bring good governance.
- Responses to the issues sometimes are indirect, if we have a good governance, we would be able to deal with the problems in SDG2030 Agenda and bring more peace to the world.
- Doing more with a small budget requires good governance. There are too many countries lagging behind with their payments. Countries are not behaving responsibly.
- Estonia is 1/40 out of 193 member states paying in full and on time. More efficiency and payments upfront are required. Reform of the U.N. that is targeted towards more efficiency and coherence is advised.

**Q. Link between peace and security and Human Rights? Mainstream this development pillar?**

- Development, Human Rights, peace and security are a big part of the prevention agenda. Reform process; to have more coherence and cooperation between the pillars. Humanitarian situations very often are the cause of conflict, they are early warnings, have to read them, no peace without development and vice versa. No peace can ever be achieved through military means alone. Peace building has to start simultaneously with several other methods, agendas must be more aligned. Need a holistic approach.

**Q. Interconnectedness of violence and security.**

- No development without security and vice versa. Hand in hand with Peacebuilding. Estonia believes they can punch above their weight. Estonia believes in good governance and that it is achievable.

**Q. Peacekeeping is an important priority for Estonia and the security council, over last year several initiatives to strengthen and improve peacekeeping operations were made how do you see these initiatives and what can further improve it?**

- Time to implement what we all know should be done, better training and clear mandates. These peacekeeping mission mandates we have to foresee the end of them in how they will transform into peace building measures.
- More women, women in peace building increases the probability of peace lasting 15 years by 30%. We have to implement it.
- Estonia is preparing its' 3<sup>rd</sup> NAP on women, training has to be specific and mandates must be country specific they have to be fit for purpose. Different methods of engagement differ country to country.

## Women

**Q. The security council has developed a comprehensive policy on women, peace and security that has gained more and deepened support over the years. There are significant gaps between the policy of what is pronounced by the security council and what is on the ground. What will Estonia do to make this gap closed?**

- WPS, legal framework exists but so much has to be done in implementation. Increase the number of women recruits in the army. Under the lead of Secretary General, gender strategy has been implemented to double women peacekeepers by 2028. 35% as women working towards complete gender parity.
- WPS has 2 pillars: involvement of women has to be early on at all stages, involved in society in early signs of conflict, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peace negotiations. There are not enough women in negotiations.
- We want women, U.N. women, to brief the security council.
- The second pillar is women as victims, sexual abuse and violence we must concentrate strongly on this. Empowerment helps but has to be helpful for the victims, sexual and reproductive help, empower for peace, work and to educate peace keepers. It starts at home.

## Youth and Children

**Q. Youth participation is extremely relevant in peace building. How can you ensure that youth will be included?**

- Resolution 250. Developments in the field already, Estonia includes delegates and took part in the youth forum. Older people are starting to listen more. Every teaching process is also a learning process.

In the security council when talking about civil society it is as important to listen to youth as they are the ones of the future. We have the sense of feeling what is happening and will have to deal with it. We must work on preventing and giving warning signs.

- Peace building: we can't do it without the youth. Young people today have become global. Going to ask young people to be a part of sec council.

**Q. In the preamble of charter of the U.N. they mention how the UN shall save the preceding generations from the scourge of war, primary responsibility lies within the security council. Do you expect the UN to evolve to a peace building body and address issues proactively and not retroactively?**

**Q. Estonia are very active in the UN family in terms of children, and are very enthusiastic about that children are a priority of the security council, the children of today are the decision makers of tomorrow, can you shed more light on more activities, what events are in order to promote this?**

- The point of prevention. Should put more resources on prevention. Nobody wants to see Venezuela developing into a conflict like Syria.
- One of the most tragic parts of conflict are children. They should be spared. Children as child soldiers should be treated as victims not perpetrators and should be rehabilitated.
- Child protection advisors need to be in place. We want to see special representatives to work with UNICEF, and they themselves presenting to the security council. Direct cooperation with countries concerned, regional organizations and awareness raising so that everybody understands children are the biggest victims.

## **Civil Society**

**Q. How do you intend to enhance the contribution of Civil Society and engagement? Providing us with reality checks & unique knowledge expertise.**

- Civil Society are the cornerstone for countries democratic process, stability, and are the best resources for information when the danger situations are coming and during conflict. Estonia intends to invite them to briefings, peacekeeping, peace building and information gathering. Some working methods have to be changed/adopted but it is a priority. Civil society's importance is already shown in our NGO membership.

**Q. Strengthening international law is a cornerstone of peace and stability. What other ways in your view do you plan to strengthen observers' compliance through CS work?**

- Need to listen more to ICJ and ICC. Need to have Human Rights high representatives talking to the body. Need to have cooperation with Human Rights council, need their expertise and from the ground. International law should apply equally to everybody.
- Countries violating international law, not applying recommendations of UN solutions should be held accountable. Should ensure our common work; peace building should succeed.

**Q. How will you address CS attacks, closing civic space is one of the most reliable Early Warning Systems of conflict?**

- UN security council resolutions shouldn't have a negative impact on CS. Cyber security has different aspects between countries, players etc. requires responsible behavior. A lot coming from the change in information.
- Misinformation on media.
- Trolled etc. influencing public opinion. A task for all of us to fix, all learning, there is no society now that can give credible solutions to that. But extremely strong cooperation's between countries, governments, public and private partnerships are needed. At the same time when we find means to tackle this problem, it shouldn't be the Civil Society that suffer.

**Q. What is perceived around the world among ordinary people as dysfunction in house fighting and power over people. We the people are being let down by what I going on in the security council this in turn spills over the whole UN system. What will you do to create an enabling environment within the sec council?**

- This is the function of the security council, the people have been let down, we have to work together to not be let down. If elected, will be trying to not do that. Seeing a change in politics. Optimistic we are in a valley right now and it will get better. Looking at whole range of issues, the image is not great,

people don't connect the good things with the UN and don't see the fabulous work by UNICEF. Same with disaster relief and peace building. Setbacks are there that aren't solved but we promise to do bridge building to work with everybody and try to bring the deadlocks out of the security council. Proxy wars by the big ones, when the small states work together, they are strong. Code of conduct in place that when enough support by countries in General Assembly they all see that there is enough pressure.

### Country specific questions

**Q. The complex humanitarian situation in Venezuela is increasing, the government is increasing violence on civilians. Security of the people is at risk. The UN and security council were created to help with problems exactly like this.**

- Exactly the case when we talk about prevention. Human Rights violations might develop into a conflict. Also, a case (Hungary) where there is a stalemate in the Security council. We must work closely with the secretary general so that Venezuela retain the rights of everyone else, we hope that the looming danger remains a danger and not an explosion

**Q. Relating to partnerships, do you have any view on partnerships with other organizations, such as in African nations? Any view in relation to whether the UN should finance operations organized by other organizations?**

- Very much in favor. Art.34 negotiations failed. But several counterparts. African, EU, UN. Support the operationalization of the Fund and African lead projects for peace. African countries definitely cannot and should not do it alone. Peace requires African solutions alongside UN support.

The debate highlighted topics of empathy and efficiency among the council. The issue of transparency being of great importance was brought up highlighting the need for transparency from both sides. Peace and security were mentioned and how they are linked with the SDGs as well as in relation to women, children and youth, along with several points made from civil society in addressing the need for increased inclusivity and communication.

The debate is used to promote transparency among the Security Council and the U.N., it gives CSO and member states the opportunity to ask questions to the candidates addressing important issues and hear their opinions and potential resolutions first hand in an interactive dialogue.