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Statement by

**Ambassador Boštjan Malovrh**

**Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia**

**to the United Nations**

at the

**UN General Assembly Debate**

**under agenda item 60 on the “Use of the Veto”**

New York, 26 April 2023

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this timely debate on the Use of the Veto. Exactly one year has passed since the adoption of the landmark Resolution on the “Standing mandate for a General Assembly debate when a veto is cast in the Security Council” which Slovenia strongly supported and co-sponsored.

This debate today is an important opportunity to reflect on the Veto Initiative in its first year and beyond; but also on the use of the Veto in general.

At the time of the adoption our hope was that this mechanism would not need to be used very often, and that it would perhaps even contribute to limiting the number of times the veto power is used.

We have probably all counted that since April last year four vetoes have been used; blocking three initiatives in the Security Council. The General Assembly has in turn convened to discuss the situations that led the use of the Veto in the Security Council – twice in GA regular plenary session and once in the 11th Emergency Special Session.

The Veto Initiative gave the wider membership in the General Assembly a greater voice in matters on the agenda of the Security Council when the Council is prevented from taking action by one of its Permanent Members. And the UN Member States, including Slovenia, took this opportunity with a great sense of responsibility. The number of speakers in these debates speaks for itself.

We believe that the Veto initiative contributed – as intended – to greater accountability for the decisions taken – or not taken – in the Security Council; while not hindering in any way its work and functioning as well as its key role within the UN system for the maintenance of international peace and security. As such, the initiative undeniably contributed to strengthening effective multilateralism and is a good example on how to bring about positive institutional change within the UN in the field of peace and security.

Mr. President,

We strongly believe that the right of veto should not be understood as a right or a privilege, but as a power that carries a great responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security and should be used as such – responsibly, transparently and with a sense of accountability. Veto should never be abused or used to block urgently needed action to maintain peace and security.

Therefore, Slovenia supports the efforts for the limitations on the use of veto.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, we strongly support and advocate for the Code of Conduct regarding the use of veto in Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. Slovenia also supports the Political Declaration on Suspension of Veto Powers in Cases of Mass Atrocity launched by France and Mexico. And we encourage those Member States that have not yet done so - to join these important initiatives.

I thank you.