



INDIA
भारत

Please check against delivery

STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. S.M. KRISHNA
MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF INDIA

AT THE

GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 29, 2010

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the General Assembly. My delegation assures you of its fullest cooperation and support in the fulfillment of the responsibilities before you.

Mr. President,

Sixty-five years ago, the United Nations was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to affirm faith in fundamental rights, to establish conditions under which respect for international law can be maintained and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. These noble aims enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations continue to remain as valid today as they were when the United Nations was founded.

The world has changed dramatically in the last six-and-a-half decades. Global integration at an economic, social, cultural and political level has made the world a smaller place. On the other hand, this has also created conditions whereby the problems and challenges of one country or region can very quickly become those of the larger community of nations.

The global threats and challenges of the 21st century are not necessarily those that were prevalent in the 20th century in the aftermath of World War II. Terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, maritime piracy, pandemics and epidemics, organized crime and narcotics smuggling, recognize no borders or boundaries. Similarly, the fallout of intra-state conflicts, failed states, natural disasters, food shortages, financial or economic crises, transcends countries and regions.

The challenges of global governance in an increasingly inter-connected and multi-polar world are truly formidable as we near the end of the first decade of the 21st century. The international community looks up to the United Nations to overcome the common challenges of humankind through the "harmonized actions of nations" as stated in the UN Charter.

Mr. President,

The United Nations, with its universal membership and equality of nations, enjoys a unique legitimacy that requires it to be at the centre of international governance. We must, therefore, not just reaffirm the central role of the UN in global governance but restore and reinforce it reflecting contemporary realities.

India remains fully committed to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and believes that the UN should be at the core of global governance and efforts to meet the challenges of collective peace, security and development. The UN, however, needs urgent reform to reflect contemporary realities and to effectively meet emerging global challenges. The changes in the global geo-strategic order since 1945 have barely been reflected in the most vital of the UN's organs, charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council spends most, if not all of its time, on issues pertaining to the developing world. Developing countries contribute almost all the troops that are part of the UN's peacekeeping presence worldwide. Yet, their voice on the Council's high table on decisions relating to international peace and security is barely audible. Despite the agenda of the Council being seized of conflicts in Africa, yet, there is no permanent member from Africa in the Security Council.

In the inter-governmental negotiations on the issue of Security Council reform, an overwhelming majority of the membership expressed clear support for expansion in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of the Council along with an improvement of its working methods. It is imperative that we take these negotiations to an early and logical conclusion.

The General Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policy making and representative organ of the UN, must set the global political, economic and social agenda. It must reclaim its position on vital matters like the appointment of the Secretary General and in the relationship between the UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions. Along with the ECOSOC, the General Assembly should also set the paradigms of multilateral engagement for the global economy and for development and development cooperation.

Mr. President,

The significant advancement of the UN's reform agenda this year in an area that is clearly a priority of our times, gender equality and women's empowerment, is a matter of satisfaction to my delegation, particularly given the pro-active role played by India in the negotiations. I wish to reiterate our strong commitment for UN WOMEN and its strengthening.

The review of the Human Rights Council this year should contribute to the Council's role as an effective and credible mechanism.

UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding and flagship activities in the core area of maintaining international peace and security, require a new global compact based on greater inclusiveness and participation in the decision making process.

India has contributed over 100,000 peacekeepers in nearly every major UN peacekeeping operation. It stands committed to UN peacekeeping.

Another area in which the UN has a key role is humanitarian assistance. It is important that international humanitarian actions fully subscribe to the humanitarian principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality.

The capacities of the UN to manage development operations need to be augmented and the funding for these needs-based activities, especially "core" untied funding, requires manifold increase. It is also imperative that the UN and its Funds and Programmes not advance particular ideological objectives linked to preferences of donors but align themselves squarely behind national priorities of developing countries.

India, within its means, has consistently contributed to the developmental and humanitarian activities of the UN, including by way of South-South cooperation through NEPAD and the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Trust Fund with the UNDP.

Mr. President,

Mahatma Gandhi once described poverty as the worst form of violence. With only five years left until the 2015 deadline to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, there is an ever greater need to ensure that firm and time bound commitments, including on the provision of resources, transfer of technology and capacity building, are made, if extreme poverty, illiteracy, hunger and disease are to be effectively curtailed.

My Government accords the highest priority to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. We, in India, understand that there can be no peace and progress unless poverty is eliminated and the fruits of development and progress shared among all countries and people. In this context, we believe that special attention needs to be focused on the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries, the Small Island Developing States, the African countries and others who are vulnerable and need special support to make them institutionally strong and economically resilient to overcome their myriad challenges. We in India are also pursuing one of the most ambitious programmes of socio-economic intervention ever undertaken, designed to free our people from poverty, provide universal education, empower women and ensure health care to all.

Our development challenges, including the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, were exacerbated by the financial and economic crisis that started in 2008. Acting in concert, the G-20, which includes the largest developed and developing countries, reacted promptly and purposefully to stem the global slowdown and send a strong message of confidence and stability. India believes that the G-20, the premier forum for international economic cooperation, can help catalyze strong, balanced and sustainable growth for the benefit of all.

Mr. President,

As a country vulnerable to and already suffering from the impacts of climate change, India has an important stake in the success of ongoing international negotiations to address climate change.

A framework to guide our action has been painstakingly built around the UN Framework Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, along with the roadmap laid out in Bali three years ago. It is time for the international community to display political vision and perseverance – to follow through and ensure that whatever we do must enhance, and not diminish, the spirit and substance of these important international agreements. There is no substitute to the UN-led process with its inherent inclusiveness and transparency.

We hope that the Conference of Parties at Cancun will take us closer to this goal.

Our collective strategy must be sensitive to the aspirations of hundreds of millions of the world's poor for a better future – including those inhabiting the Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and the countries of Africa – and take account of our differential capacities.

Clearly, with their greater capacity to contribute, the developed countries must take lead in this process and fulfill their obligations – not only in terms of more ambitious commitments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but also in helping the developing countries in their mitigation and adaptation efforts. A paradigm for equitable burden sharing that provides for an equal sharing of the resource of the atmosphere for all human beings is a natural expectation we have from the on-going negotiations.

In India, despite our huge developmental challenges, we are doing everything possible, within the limitation of our own resources, to contribute to the global action on climate change through an ambitious National Action Plan. We are willing to work with the international community in a forward-looking and positive spirit, acknowledging our responsibilities as citizens of the globe, to achieve a comprehensive, balanced and above all, an equitable outcome to the on-going negotiations.

Mr. President,

India has an abiding commitment for achieving universal, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament within a specified timeframe, a vision that was most eloquently articulated here in the General Assembly by Prime

Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1988. More than two decades later the painful reality is that this goal still remains a distant one. In the meantime, newer threats have emerged, including the threat of terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

India tabled a working paper on nuclear disarmament in 2006 containing specific proposals that reflect the spirit and substance of the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan. We call for an intensification of discussion and dialogue amongst Member States and the larger non-governmental communities so as to strengthen the international consensus that can be translated into concrete action on achieving nuclear disarmament. I participated in the High Level Meeting on Disarmament called by the Secretary General on 24th September to lend India's support for the objectives of that meeting.

India remains committed to the negotiation in the CD of a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable FMCT that meets India's national security interests. We hope that the Conference will be able to commence negotiations at an early date. We remain committed to a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

Mr. President,

Terrorism has emerged as one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. To defeat this scourge, it is imperative for the global community to build on international cooperation and take concerted action against terrorists and their sponsors. Acts of terrorism need to be condemned by all, wherever and whenever they are committed, by whomsoever and for whatever purposes. There can be no justification for terrorism just as there can be no good and bad terrorists.

India is a party to all major international conventions against terrorism and fully supports implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism strategy. However, there remain considerable gaps in the international legal framework against terrorism. The Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is designed to fill these gaps. We urge Member States to display the necessary political will to finalise and adopt the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Mr. President,

Peace and stability in South Asia is one of our highest priorities. We are committed to good neighbourly relations with all our neighbours, including Pakistan. It is in this spirit of solidarity with the people of Pakistan in their hour of need, that we pledged US\$ 25 million aid which is being channeled through the UN for flood relief efforts in that country. As a neighbor we wished to provide succor and relief in a timely manner to the victims of this natural disaster. We are saddened by the loss of life and property that Pakistan has suffered as a result of these unprecedented floods.

It is well known that many countries have deep-rooted concerns about the growth and consolidation of militancy and terrorism in Pakistan. We share these concerns, particularly because Jammu & Kashmir, which is an integral part of India, is the target of such Pakistan-sponsored militancy and terrorism. Pakistan must fulfill its solemn commitment of not allowing territory under its control to be used for terrorism directed against India. Credible and firm action by Pakistan against terrorist groups operating from its soil is in the interest of the region as it is in Pakistan's own interest. Pakistan cannot impart lessons to us on democracy and human rights. If, however, Pakistan were to live up to its commitment not to allow use of its soil by terrorists acting against India, this would significantly help reduce the trust deficit that impedes the development of better bilateral relations between our two countries. We are neighbours, and as neighbours, we have an obligation to work together.

The peoples of South Asia share a common destiny and my government has consistently stressed that we will work together with our South Asian brothers and sisters to build a future that brings prosperity and development through strengthened dialogue and cooperation.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan has recently successfully concluded parliamentary elections. We believe the international community needs to be steadfast in its engagement with Afghanistan to ensure the success of its reconstruction efforts and its emergence as a democratic, pluralistic and prosperous

society. The continuing existence of safe havens and sanctuaries for terrorists beyond Afghanistan's borders is the major impediment to the restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan. This should be a primary focus of the international community.

Mr. President,

India was among the original signatories of the UN Charter in 1945. We have, at every step thereafter, done what we could to strengthen this great endeavor that represents the aspirations of all humanity.

Speaking in 1948, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, said that the "fundamental principles on which the UN is based are the right principles. We believe in those fundamental principles and want to help the organization in following these principles."

The Government and the more than one billion people of India have stood by this commitment.

Mr. President,

I would like to solemnly reaffirm our faith in the principles that underlie the United Nations and in the United Nations system.

Thank you
