

**Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations
New York
[September 2019]**

Priority Issues and Approach to the 74th session of the UNGA

1. The 74th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 74) will open on 17 September 2019 and end mid-September 2020. Since its 44th session (1989–90), the General Assembly has been formally regarded as being “in session” for the entire year. There are two distinct parts of a session. The time from mid-September to the Christmas break in December is called the “main part of the session” – *includes the general debate and bulk of the work of the Main Committees*. The period from January to September is called the “resumed part of the session” – *thematic debates, President of the General Assembly-led consultation processes, and working group meetings take place during that period*.
2. Professor Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria, a Nigerian political scientist, educationist and career diplomat and currently serving as the Nigerian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, was unanimously elected by acclamation as the President of the 74th session of the UNGA. He has chosen **“Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion”** as the theme for the 74th UNGA. Prof. Tijjani also announced the following four priorities in his vision statement.
 - i. Promoting international peace and security, in particular, conflict prevention.
 - ii. Strengthening global action to tackle climate change.
 - iii. Accentuating inclusion, human rights, and the empowerment of youth and women.
 - iv. Promoting partnerships for advancing the achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goals 1, 2 and 4 on poverty eradication, zero hunger and quality education.
3. The 74th session will witness greater focus on strengthening global action to tackle climate change, which is integral to the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Efforts will be targeted at promoting partnerships for advancing the achievement of the SDGs, in particular Goals 1, 2 and 4 on poverty eradication, zero hunger and quality education, respectively. Accentuating inclusion, promotion of human rights and the empowerment of women and youth will receive special attention. Enhanced multi-stakeholder partnerships in promoting international peace and security, in particular, conflict prevention will receive greater attention. In addition to these issues, the incoming President has identified reforms of the UN Security Council (UNSC) as a priority to respond to global challenges, including terrorism.
4. The first day of the high-level General Debate will be Tuesday, 24 September 2019. However, during the week of the debate, several other high-level events will take place:

- i. On Monday, 23 September, the UN Secretary-General will convene a Climate Summit, and the UNGA will hold a one-day high-level meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC);
- ii. On Tuesday, 24 September, following the opening of the 74th General Debate, the UNGA will convene a meeting of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which will take place on the afternoon of 24 September and all day on 25 September;
- iii. On Thursday, 26 September, the UNGA will hold a high-level dialogue on financing for development (FfD), as well as a high-level meeting on the elimination of nuclear weapons; and
- iv. On Friday, 27 September, the UNGA will hold the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States (SIDS) through the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

Priority Issues for 74th UNGA:

5. During the 74th session, India will engage on a wide range of issues ranging from economic relations, human rights, social and cultural issues, legal matters, to budgetary issues. Focus will grow on implementation of the UN Secretary General's reform proposals, especially reform of the UN development system as also on the upcoming negotiations on Universal Health Coverage and follow up of the BAPA+40 processes. India has continued to project its longstanding and growing credentials as a South-South development partner, especially in the context of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, Financing for Development and also its commitment to the idea of global partnership under SDG 17 including on climate change (founding of the International Solar Alliance and co-leading the Industry Transition Track of the Secretary General's Climate Action Summit). Placed below is a list of priority issues for India:
 - i. Maintain India's active engagement on issues relating to sustainable development and climate change.
 - ii. Utilize the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women to showcase India's commitments and achievements in women led development particularly women's leadership and political participation at the grassroots level, prevention of sexual harassment and violence against women, providing access to clean cooking fuel, sanitation and health coverage including maternal and child health etc.
 - iii. Promote Indian positions and arguments in the consultations and subsequent inter-governmental negotiations on Universal Health Coverage.
 - iv. Strength engagement with fellow developing countries, especially LDCs and SIDS through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund and IBSA Fund in the spirit of South-South cooperation.
 - v. Bring India's perspective to the debates relating to human rights including the right to development and will continue to highlight India's achievements in realizing the rights of different groups including women, children, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

- vi. Attach greater prominence to issues relating to counter-terrorism; pushing for more transparency in the process of listing and delisting of entities and individuals in sanction committees.
- vii. Engage substantively as a Troop Contributing Country in finalizing of mandates for UN peacekeeping missions. Raising the issue of pending arrears of closed peacekeeping missions and other claims.
- viii. Take forward India's pragmatic and constructive approach on disarmament issues at the First Committee and UN Disarmament Commission and engage with all partners on issues related to space, small arms and light weapons, etc.
- ix. Continue to pursue the issue of reform of the Security Council for a meaningful outcome in the 75th session.

Approach to issues during the 74th session of the UNGA

Climate Action Summit:

6. On 23rd September 2019, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene the UN Climate Summit under the theme "A Race We Can Win. A Race We Must Win," to mobilize political and economic energy at the highest levels to advance climate action that will enable implementation of many of Sustainable Development Goals. Its aim to challenge states, regions, cities, companies, investors and citizens to step up action in nine areas: mitigation; social and political drivers; youth and public mobilization; financing; energy transition; industry transition; nature-based solutions; infrastructure, cities and local action; and resilience and adaptation.
7. India is closely associated with the Secretary General's Climate Action Summit of 23 September 2019. India along with Sweden are the Co-Leads of the Industry Transition Track. In cooperation with the World Economic Forum, the Industry Transition workstream is focusing on the creation of an ecosystem for industrial transformation building on industry commitments, public-private collaboration and innovation, to promote emission reductions from heavy industry and transport with a goal to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century. A number of side events are planned during the weekend preceding the Climate Action Summit. At these side events, the Industry Transition Coalition will present select new initiatives and announcements contributing to global heavy industry transformation. The initiatives proposed to be announced include the following:
 - i. **Net-zero steel initiative:** Will demonstrate how steel can play a key role in a net-zero emissions economy, increase industry consensus on the steps needed for the industry to reach net-zero emissions, present a unified front when engaging policy makers on what is needed and create mechanisms to meet create markets and demand for low-CO₂ steel. The objective is to move from responsible sourcing compliance to sustainable steel market creation.
 - ii. **Aluminium for Climate:** will show how the industry can become a positive contributor to a net-zero GHG economy, increase stakeholder knowledge of technology pathways, create demand mechanisms for low

- carbon aluminium and present common policy asks when engaging policy makers and regulators.
- iii. **Business Chambers Climate Coalition:** This session will feature an announcement on the number of chambers now signed up to support 1.5°C and net zero. It will also provide a platform for chambers to announce individual climate initiatives they are launching – and send a grassroots message to policy makers on the need for greater ambition and action.
 - iv. **Clean Road Freight Coalition:** The coalition will convene actors across the value chain from equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to logistics providers, end customers, fuel providers and electric utilities, battery manufacturers and technology companies. The initiative is working towards establishing the consensus within the industry that net-zero CO₂ emissions from the trucking sector is technologically feasible by 2050 and focus R&D investments towards this goal.
 - v. **Clean Skies for Tomorrow:** This will drive innovative solutions to build competitive supply options and create a market with a strong demand signal for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) to move towards net-zero carbon emissions in the aviation industry.
 - vi. **Circular Cars Initiative (CCI):** This initiative is committed to highlighting the impact of circular cars on the cost development and footprint of automotive mobility. The initiative works towards transforming the industry through the lens of the circular economy and mobility as a service. This will be delivered through three focus areas: Design for longevity through sharing and pooling concepts, improved materials management and advanced re-manufacturing. The circular cars initiative engages stakeholders along the automotive value chain including material suppliers, fleet operators, remanufacturers, recyclers, data platforms and regulators to capitalize on this transformation.
8. India is committed to fulfil its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) well before the target date and protect its rich environment and pursue a path of sustainable low carbon development. India is also committed to secure basic amenities like food, water, health, housing and electricity for all to its citizens, while preserving and enhancing the natural eco-systems. We also believe that the full implementation of the Paris Agreement under UNFCCC based on the principles of Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) would accelerate the achievement of our collective climate goals. At the forthcoming Climate Action Summit, India will also be announcing new and ambitious national climate initiatives.

Global Pact on Environment:

9. In contrast to the global trading system, which grants the World Trade Organization pride of place as a rule-setter and adjudicator, there is no umbrella treaty or organization governing global environmental matters. Instead, there is a patchwork of technical conventions that promote cooperation on specific areas, such as climate change (the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), biodiversity (the Convention on Biological Diversity), trade in endangered species (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered

Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), wetlands (the Ramsar Convention), persistent organic pollutants (the Stockholm Convention), hazardous waste (the Basel Convention), the ozone layer (the Montreal Protocol), soil conservation (the Desertification Convention) and marine pollution (MarPol).

10. In May 2018, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution (A/RES/72/277) titled "Towards a Global Pact for the Environment." It instructed the Secretary-General to identify gaps in international environmental law (IEL) and propose how these might be filled. SG submitted his report in November 2018. Since then, UN member states have held three negotiating sessions of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in Nairobi, Kenya. The final document, adopted by the OEWG at its third substantive session on 23 May 2019, has three sections, setting out:
 - i. Objectives, including the reinforcement of environmental protection for present and future generations and strengthening IEL and environment-related instruments;
 - ii. Substantive recommendations; and
 - iii. Consideration of further work.

11. Multilateral talks have since shifted to New York. The OEWG has asked the General Assembly to circulate its recommendations to UN Member States and members of UN specialized agencies and governing bodies of multilateral environmental agreements for consideration and action. The OEWG also recommends that UNGA forward the recommendations to the United Nations Environment Assembly for its consideration, in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme in 2022, with a view to strengthening IEL and environmental governance. India has been closely associated with Global Pact on Environment since its inception and will continue to engage with the process.

Peacekeeping:

12. UN peacekeeping is a unique global partnership. It brings together the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop and police contributors and the host governments in a combined effort to maintain international peace and security. Peacekeeping has unique strengths, including legitimacy, burden sharing, and an ability to deploy and sustain troops and police from around the globe, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to advance multidimensional mandates.

13. UN peacekeepers provide security and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace. Today's multidimensional peacekeeping operations are called upon not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law. There are currently 14 UN peacekeeping operations deployed on four continents.

14. Commencing with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in 1950, **India has a long and distinguished history of service in UN peacekeeping**, having contributed more personnel than any other country, as well as the first-ever all-female force that helped to bring peace to Liberia in the wake of that country's brutal civil war. India has provided over 200,000 military and police officers to UN Peacekeeping over the last 70 years. From protecting civilians, disarming ex-combatants and helping countries transition from conflict to peace, Indian men and women in uniform have served the cause of peace from the earliest years of United Nations peacekeeping and continue to do so in some of the most challenging missions.
15. Indians have served in 49 of the 71 peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948. **Currently, there are around 6,700 uniformed peacekeepers from India**, the vast majority of them in the Democratic Republic of Congo and in South Sudan. **India has also provided 15 Force Commanders to various missions**, and was the first country to contribute to the Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse, which was set up in 2016. India's longstanding service has not come without cost; as of 30 June 2018, over 160 Indian peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price while serving with the United Nations. **India has lost more peacekeepers than any other Member State.**
16. **The overall UN peacekeeping numbers however are going down.** This process started in 2015 and has accelerated from 2017 onwards. This is in part due to pressure from some member states to reduce the scope of UN activities and budgets. The recent downtrend in UN peacekeeping is clearly reflected in annual peacekeeping budget expenditures over the last few years, with declining spending in absolute terms and per capita on military and police personnel, civilian personnel, and operational costs across all DPKO-led peacekeeping operations.
17. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations or **C-34** had requested the UN Secretariat to develop an **Integrated Performance Policy Framework (IPPF)** framework to assess performance of all stakeholders involved in peacekeeping. At the present the focus has been on the formulation of **Comprehensive Performance Assessment System (CPAS)** aimed at assessing the performance of all civil and uniformed personnel in the Peacekeeping missions. India will continue to engage with the Secretariat to finalize the IPPF and CPAS.
18. Peacekeeping faces several challenges such as protracted conflicts, elusive political solutions, increasingly dangerous environments, rising peacekeeping fatalities, and broad and complex mandates. To respond to these challenges, the Secretary-General launched **Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)** to refocus peacekeeping with more targeted mandates, make our operations stronger and safer, mobilize support for political solutions and better equipped and trained forces. In order to ensure that all stakeholders fulfil the declaration of shared commitment in accordance with the A4P initiative, the Secretariat has introduced the concept of **A4P Champions and Conveners** with an aim to

ensure that Member States take the ownership and drive the implementation. This will be a key area of focus for India in the coming year.

19. The Office of Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership (OPSP) has already completed a strategic review of most of the High-Risk Missions. The **Action Plan Safety & Security of Peacekeepers** includes a number of measures, such as the missions to support national authorities in prosecutions for attacks against peacekeepers, or re-examinations of missions' deployment footprint with regard to priority locations, threat assessments, mission support and medical considerations as well as operational capacities. This year the Secretariat will continue its focus on key areas of training, improving performance of peacekeepers, ensuring availability of proper medical facilities and adequate logistic infrastructure in mission area, etc.
20. **Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) Working Group 2020** will be convened from 20 January to 31 January 2020 in UNHQ to conduct the triennial review of current reimbursement rates and consider issue papers related to technical standards, procedures and policies of the COE reimbursement system. The Working Group will convene an organizational pre-session meeting to elect its Bureau and adopt the agenda. The pre-session meeting is scheduled to take place on 21 November 2019. India has already submitted 7 Issue Papers and National Cost Data accordingly.
21. The next **UN Defence Peacekeeping Ministerial** is scheduled to be held in Republic of Korea in March 2020. It may be recalled that the 2019 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial on Uniformed Capabilities, Performance and Protection was held in New York on 29 March 2019. More than 130 Member States and intergovernmental organizations had gathered at the UNHQ to discuss and generate the specialized capabilities necessary for contemporary peacekeeping, with a specific focus on performance, protection of civilians, women and peace & security through the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative.
22. The **Substantive Session of the C-34** will be held for a duration of four weeks in **Feb-Mar 2020** based on the revised 'working methods' and 'programme of work' which were adopted on 24 July 2019.
23. The UN Secretariat will continue to focus on activities related to the implementation of SG's zero tolerance policy on **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)**. On 24 September 2019, in advance of the General Debate and his series of bilateral meetings with Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General plans to tweet thanking the members of the **SG's Circle of Leadership** (Indian Prime Minister is a member) for their sustained commitment to eradicating sexual exploitation and abuse in UN operations.
24. **United Nations Police** has undergone a dramatic transformation since the first deployment of UN police to the United Nations Mission in the Congo in 1960. With the advent of complex, multidimensional peacekeeping operations, UNPOL has evolved into a dynamic, full-fledged police service and a central

pillar of the UN's peace operations. Today, around 11,000 male and female police officers from 88 countries are deployed in 12 UN peace operations.

25. Following the reviews and summits on the peacekeeping operations in 2014 and 2015, adoption and implementation of Security Council resolution (S/RES/2185) on policing, the UN since 2016 has been organizing **UN Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS)**. During this event, Chiefs of police from member states, other key partners and the senior United Nations representatives deliberate on issues concerning the UN Police in peacekeeping operations including what it takes for UN Police to perform effectively and realize the Secretary-General's vision of "a transformed UN Police that is people-centered, mission-oriented, modern, agile, mobile and flexible, specialized and rights-based". The third UNCOPS will be held in June 2020 in New York.

Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace:

26. There is growing recognition of the importance of the concepts of peacebuilding and sustaining peace in the UN system, especially since the adoption of identical resolutions in the Security Council and GA in 2016. **India will continue to stress the need to focus on the long term development dimension both to prevent conflict and undertake effective peacebuilding efforts to achieve lasting peace and security;** enlarged funding for peacebuilding; the need for optimum coordination with other UN organs, especially the Security Council and most of all the need for genuine political will for a long-term commitment and sustained investment among those who can contribute in this regard. India has been a contributor to the Peacebuilding Fund.
27. UNSG Guterres has focused on prevention of conflicts and mediation. The 2020 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture will be the main focus under this area during the 74 UNGA. The review aims to further improve the work of UN on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and would take stock of the work done in the implementation of 2016 resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture and take into account the 2018 Report of the Secretary General on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43), his 2019 interim report (A/73/890-S/2019/448) and the report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace due at the 74th session of the General Assembly.
28. A joint debate on the Report of the Peacebuilding Commission, and the Report of the Secretary General on Peacebuilding Fund is held every year at the General Assembly during the month of May. In November 2019, an Annual Session on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace with focus on Sahel region is proposed to be held (similar to the interactive session that was held in November 2018). A Joint Meeting of the ECOSOC and Peacebuilding Commission, with focus on Sahel, is proposed to be held a day after the Annual Session.

Counter Terrorism:

29. The biennial review of **Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (GCTS)**, which was originally adopted in 2006, is expected to begin during the 74th UNGA in April 2020. The review is the seventh in this series and a resolution would be adopted in the month of June or July 2020 after conclusion of member states' negotiations. The adoption of the resolution would be followed by the **2nd High-Level Conference on the Heads of CT Agencies** and the **1st Global Congress on Victims of Terrorism**.
30. The GCTS review in 2020 is expected to witness discussions on handling returning and relocating foreign terrorist fighters and their family members, especially women and children, their prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration; usage of biometric and biographic details in border management and the issue of data security and privacy while implementing API/PNR projects; implementation of UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) projects on preventing violent extremism; welcoming the participation of civil society in UN high level Counter-Terrorism events; role of private players in the protection of critical infrastructure; and involvement of women and youth in national and regional strategies to counter terrorism and preventing violent extremism, policy formulation and implementation, etc.
31. After the sixth review of GCTS in 2018, some significant developments happened in the field of countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism. Security Council adopted resolutions on preventing and countering financing of terrorism (S/RES/2462); addressing linkage between terrorism and organized crime (S/RES/2482); while UNGA adopted resolution on enhancement of international cooperation to assist victims of terrorism (A/RES/73/305).
32. Launch of UN Strategy and Plan of Action on hate speech by the Secretary General, ongoing consultation on the UN Plan of Action to protect and safeguard religious sites, threats from the use of emerging technologies by terrorists and also the use of new technologies to counter the terrorist threats are some of the themes that would appear in CT related processes at the UN. There will be increased focus on the efforts to counter spread of incitement to violence in internet and social media following the Christchurch and Easter bombing in Sri Lanka.
33. The objective of having the UNGA adopt a **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)** has been repeatedly raised by India. The negotiations on a draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) have not progressed due to continuing serious disagreements on definitional issues. The Working Group set up by the Sixth Committee to resolve all outstanding issues related to finalizing the process on the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) will continue its work during the 74th UNGA from 7 October to 14 November 2019. The Chairman (Sri Lanka) and the Coordinator (Peru) of the Working Group will hold formal and informal meetings to make efforts during the intersessional period towards resolving outstanding issues under the issue. India will continue to

push for and support a greater profile to the counter-terrorism activities at the UN; make efforts to decrease differences on outstanding issues on the long-pending draft CCIT; seek greater transparency and effectiveness of the relevant UN Sanctions Committee, and other ways to bring coherence and focus to UN's work on counter-terrorism. India will continue to explore possibilities of facilitating the discussions.

Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals:

34. In September 2015, with the adoption of the UN's Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, world leaders unanimously agreed that there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. Most of the priorities outlined by the incoming President of the UNGA, viz. poverty eradication, zero hunger, quality education and inclusiveness, are all reflected as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Agenda 2030.
35. **India has given its strong commitment to SDGs.** Its key major developmental programmes, the strategies for a 'New India' by 2022, and the country's vision for 2030 are aligned with the spirit of the SDGs. For instance, the flagship programmes of the Government of India such as Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission), Ayushman Bharat (National Health Protection Scheme), Swachh Bharat (Clean India), Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Care for the Girl Child), Kaushal Vikas Yojana (Skill Development), Ujjwala Yojana (Clean Cooking Fuel initiative), Rural Electrification program, and Smart Cities Mission, just to name a few, directly address the challenges highlighted by the SDGs. The International Solar Alliance, co-founded by India, is another example of the country's leadership in the global arena towards a sustainable future.
36. The underlying principle of India's flagship programmes has been articulated by Prime Minister Modi as **'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas'** (through everyone's support, for everyone's development and towards everyone's trust). **This slogan mirrors the essence of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of leaving no one behind.** India's success in adopting, implementing, and monitoring SDGs stands testimony to the principle of cooperative federalism as envisioned by the Government of India. The localisation of SDGs has been ascribed utmost importance, as the States and Union Territories (UTs) are the actual implementors of the country's ambitious development agenda. While NITI Aayog (India's national Think Tank) sets the high-level framework and monitors progress at national and sub-national levels, the implementation of the SDG agenda is rigorously pursued by the States and UTs. India completed its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) in the spirit of international cooperation and presented at the 2017. **During the 74th UNGA, India will be presenting its second Voluntary National Review at the 2020 High Level Political Forum on SDGs.**
37. While the SDGs are global, their achievement will depend on the ability to make them a reality in constituent States, cities, districts and villages. Therefore, State governments have the prime responsibility in achieving SDGs and are essential stakeholders in implementing the Agenda 2030. Reflecting the

country's long-standing federal tradition, **States and UTs are taking a host of measures to implement the SDGs**. The localisation processes spearheaded by the States have thrown interesting results and there are several early lessons that need to be captured to further nuance the approach to localisation. To reduce intra-region disparities, a programme called 'Transformation of Aspirational District', has been rolled out across 112 districts to improve service delivery across the lagging regions and is closely related to achievement of some of the SDGs. The regional to national nexus is the core of India's SDG efforts, India will also nurture partnerships at the global level to ensure a comprehensive approach.

South-South Cooperation:

38. The BAPA+40 conference held in March 2019 in Buenos Aires, Argentina reiterated the importance and potential of South-South Cooperation and provided us with a roadmap for South-South and triangular cooperation in stepping up support for national and regional development efforts towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. This outcome of the conference will help guide us while reviewing the format and organizational aspects of High-Level Political Forum on SDGs during the 74th session of the UNGA, for the next cycle of four years.
39. **India's approach to development cooperation is rooted in its social ethos, defined variously, but encompassed by the philosophy of Sarvodaya, meaning 'development and progress of all'**. Our working with fellow developing countries translates this philosophy into reality. We support Southern-owned and led, demand-driven, and transformational sustainable development projects. Our focus has been and continues to remain on least developed countries and small island developing states.
40. **India has considerable experience in the field of South-South Cooperation, bilaterally as well as the triangular involving the UN**. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund established in June 2017 and hosted in the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) works with fellow developing countries in the spirit of South-South cooperation by providing support to projects that aim to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as per their request. The initial capital committed to the Fund was US\$ 100 million over a period of ten years. Subsequently, in April 2018, with a view to work specifically with countries of the Commonwealth, a new "Commonwealth Window" was added to the Fund with a committed amount of US\$ 50 million over the next five years— taking the total amount to US\$ 150 million under the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.
41. In the last two years of its inception, the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, 23 projects (out of this 4 under Commonwealth Window) worth US\$ 15 million are already under implementation. As of date, projects in Eswatini, Papua New Guinea and Mauritania have been completed. 14 projects (8 under Commonwealth Window) worth US\$ 10.9 million stand approved and are currently under formulation stage. Also, projects worth US\$ 3.5 million are in the pipeline. So far, India has contributed an amount of US\$ 22 million to the

Fund. We will continue expanding and diversifying the India-UN Development Partnership Fund portfolio.

42. The IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger also hosted at the UNOSSC is another unique mechanism for South-South Cooperation. Established in 2004 and operationalized in 2006, the IBSA Fund supports projects on a demand-driven basis through partnerships with local governments, national institutions and implementing partners. Initiatives are concrete expressions of solidarity and objectives range from promoting food security, to addressing HIV/AIDS, to extending access to safe drinking water – all with the aim of contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Fund identifies replicable and scalable projects that can be disseminated to interested developing countries as examples of best practices in the fight against poverty and hunger. Since 2004, a total of US\$39.3 million was contributed to the Fund by the three countries. Of this, India's contribution was US\$14 million. The Fund has undertaken a total of 33 projects, of which 13 are under execution, while 20 have been completed.

Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ):

43. The Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on an international legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction is being convened to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the UNCLOS. Drawing from the first two sessions of the (IGC) held in September 2018 and March-April 2019, there will be a draft text of an agreement, prepared by IGC President in conjunction with the Division of Ocean Affairs & Law of the Sea (DOALOS) that addresses the topics identified in the package agreed in 2011, including: marine genetic resources (MGRs), including questions on benefit-sharing; area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; environmental impact assessments; and capacity building and marine technology transfer. The third and fourth sessions of the IGC will be held in New York in August 2019 and February 2020 respectively.
44. India supports the process to develop an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and the rights of nations, including freedom of the high seas. India will work towards ensuring that any new instrument created would encompass marine genetic resources currently known or which may be discovered at any time in the future; and address issues relating to the access, exploration, exploitation, conservation and sustainable use of these resources. India will also ensure that the new instrument takes into account ecosystem approaches, precautionary principle and the emerging best practices.

ICT and International Security:

45. India seeks to actively engage in the forthcoming discussions related to developments in the field of Information and Communication Technologies

(ICTs) in the context of international security. The discussions will be held under the aegis of Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security in which all UN Member States will participate and a 25-member Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security in which an Indian expert is also a Member.

46. India believes that there is a need to develop better understanding of applicability of international law in cyberspace. The novel character of cyberspace and the vulnerability of cyber infrastructure have led to questions whether existing international law can provide sufficient answers to the emerging concerns in cyberspace. The common understanding on how international law is applicable to State's use of ICTs is important for promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible, interoperable and peaceful ICT environment. India hopes that future discussions under UN and other multilateral fora will continue to study these issues with a view to promoting common understanding on existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them.

High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation:

47. The Fourth Industrial Revolution continues to open new possibilities for health care, education, humanitarian assistance and much else. But alongside these benefits, member states need to address the disruption of labour markets, the weaponization of artificial intelligence and the heinous activities on the dark web. New technologies are also outpacing national capacities to reckon with their profound impacts. The Secretary General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation in its final report submitted in June 2019 calls for building an inclusive digital economy and society, developing human and institutional capacity, protecting human rights and human agency, promoting digital trust, security and stability, and fostering global digital cooperation. The report also provides recommendations on proposals for reducing digital inequality, building digital capacity and ensuring that new technologies are on our side and are a force for good.
48. The report recognises the revolutionary digital initiatives taken by India to ensure economic inclusion for its 1.3 billion citizens. The report also mentions India Stack, an application programming interface that allows governments, businesses, startups and developers to utilise a unique digital infrastructure to provide presence-less, paperless and cashless service delivery. The report by the Panel calls for enhanced multi-stakeholder digital cooperation, involving governments, civil society, academics, technologists, marginalised groups and the private sector. India is of the view that any such cooperation must be grounded in common human values such as inclusiveness, respect, human-centeredness, human rights, international law, transparency and sustainability. During the 74th session, India will continue to actively take part in the various follow up workshops and conferences that the Panel will be undertaking.

Security Council Reform:

49. On 15 September 2008, the General Assembly adopted Decision 62/557 on the “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters”, which also called for commencement of intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) on Security Council reforms. Decision 62/557 also mentioned that the IGN on Security Council Reform (IGN) should refer to five key issues: categories of membership; the question of the veto; regional representation; size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. The IGN officially started in early 2009, and has continued since then in informal plenary of the General Assembly.
50. The IGN process during the 73rd session did not see much progress and culminated with the General Assembly adopting the roll-over decision for continuation of the IGN process into the 74th session. The roll over decision includes two documents, i.e. the current paper titled, “Revised Elements of Commonality and Issues for further Consideration” and the “Framework Document” of 2015. The IGN process during the last session was marked by adoption of opaque methodologies and non-attribution of assertions and procedures of the General Assembly.
51. Going forward, India will continue to work with all countries that are supportive of reform of the Security Council. We will work towards early appointment of Co-Chairs and push for an early start of the IGN session to accommodate more meetings during the 74th session. India will work towards ensuring that discussions in the IGN are **transparent, focused and result oriented**. There is an urgent need to work on a consolidated text in the IGN, with each meeting to be based on discussions on the revised iteration of the paper and start of **text-based negotiations** no later than 2020.

Human Rights & Social Issues:

52. **2020 marks the 25th year of the Fourth World Conference on Women** (held in September 1995 in Beijing) which adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which remains the most comprehensive global blueprint for gender equality and empowerment of women. There would also be an annual General Assembly resolution in the Third Committee on the follow-up of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The main focus of the **64th session of the Commission on Status of Women** will be on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
53. Intense negotiations are expected during the 74th session of the General Assembly on issues such as women’s sexual and reproductive rights and other issues such as references to sexual harassment, violence and role of family. India would continue to play a constructive and balancing role on all women-related matters considering India’s emphasis on women led development and protection and promotion of women’s rights in implementation of SDGs.

54. India is a member of **Commission on Social Development**. The next session of the commission will be held in February 2020 which will focus on 'Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness'. Given India's commitment to providing an affordable roof over each household by 2022 through the Prime Minister's Housing for All programme (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - PMAY), these deliberations would be important for us to showcase our commitments and positive steps taken in this area. The urban component of PMAY encourages adoption of innovative and green technologies and building materials for faster and better-quality construction of houses. Similarly, the aim for the rural component is to incorporate the use of building materials and technologies that can increase strength and durability, reduce costs, and bring down construction time.
55. The 53rd Session of the **Commission on Population and Development (CPD)** will be held in April 2020 and will focus on priority theme 'Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development'. The discussions in this Commission are intense given its emphasis on population control and sexual and reproductive health and rights and women's rights in general. There have not been any outcomes in three out of the last five years. This year's topic is particularly important for us given the growing population and the sensitivity around the issues of food subsidies in India. The discussions in would have to be approached from this perspective.
56. Bi-annual resolutions on '**protection of migrants**' and '**Violence against women migrant workers**' would be important for our delegation in the Third Committee in the next session. There has been a tendency among a few member states to combine the different categories such as migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons together. However, retaining these distinctions has been one of our successes in the negotiations of the Global Compact and Migrations and on Global Compact on Refugees.
57. 2019 marks the **30th anniversary** of the adoption of **Convention on the Rights of the Child**. There will be a General Assembly High Level Event on 25th September 2019 during the UNGA and a GA High Level Plenary Meeting on 20th November 2019.
58. The first ever **UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** will be held on September 23, 2019. The High-Level meeting under the theme, 'Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Moving Together to Build a Healthier World', will bring together heads of state, political and health leaders, policy-makers, and universal health coverage champions to advocate for health for all. The upcoming High-Level Meeting on UHC will be the last chance before 2023, the mid-point of the SDGs, to mobilise the highest political support to package the entire health agenda under the umbrella of UHC, and sustain health investments in a harmonised manner.
59. The event will focus on accelerating progress towards universal health coverage, including access to essential health services, including skilled health workforce, financial risk protection and access to safe, quality, effective and

affordable medicines and vaccines for all. The meeting which is expected to result in a political declaration to be endorsed by the leaders is in the process of being negotiated.

60. The High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage is an important event for India considering the recent launch of the Aayushman Bharat program which extends access to hospital care for 500 million poor and vulnerable people. Combined with the extension of comprehensive primary health care (to deliver a wide range of services, including for maternal and child health and infectious diseases), the Ayushman Bharat initiative ensures that the poor and vulnerable households can access quality health services when and where they need them, without suffering financial hardship.
61. The annual omnibus resolution on **Global Health and Foreign Policy** will be adopted in GA in December 2019. In the coming year GA meetings on **Antimicrobial Resistance** and **Road Safety** are expected to be convened. In addition, there would several important resolutions in the Third Committee on trafficking, drugs and crimes, disability, development of youth, water and sanitation (by Germany and Spain), strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization (by the US), Russian resolution on ICT (India was a co-sponsor last year). There would also be five country-specific resolutions on DPRK, Iran, Syria, Myanmar and Ukraine.
62. On the Human Rights front, India will continue to emphasize that discussions on Human Rights at the UN should be held with a constructive approach. The focus of the Human Rights Council, the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Special Rapporteurs and the entire Treaty Body mechanisms must be to strengthen the capabilities of national governments in their efforts towards promotion and protection of human rights. India had last presented its third Universal Periodic Review on its implementation of various human rights conventions in Geneva in May 2017.

Elections:

63. The General Assembly holds approximately a dozen elections of Member States or individuals to various UN bodies each year. The GA elects the non-permanent members of the Security Council. Each of the current 193 Member States has one vote. The distribution of seats among Member States to various bodies is based on the principle of equitable geographical representation. In order to facilitate balanced distribution, Member States are informally divided into five regional groups: Group of African States, Group of Asia-Pacific States, Group of Eastern European States, Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), and Western European and Other States Group (Group of Western European and Other States).
64. Election to the Security Council requires a two-thirds majority. While elections are intensely contested among Member States, regional groups often agree to present the same number of candidates as there are seats allocated to them. This is called a "clean slate." A regional group may choose to follow an internal

rotation system for certain seats. The GA elects the 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council. Five members are elected each year for a term of two years, and no immediate re-election is possible. The regional distribution of non-permanent seats is as follows: 5 seats for the African and Asia-Pacific States, 1 seat for the Group of Eastern European States, 2 seats for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), and 2 seats for the Western European and Other States Group.

65. **In June 2020, India will contest election for non-permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the term 2021-2022.** Within the Asia-Pacific Group (APG), **India is on a “clean slate”**. The APG endorsed India’s candidature in June 2019 as it was the only candidate from the APG since announcing its candidature way back in 2013. India has, so far, served as non-permanent member of UNSC seven times, the last term being in 2011-2012.
66. India will also seek to become a member of the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** for the term 2021-2025, elections for which are likely to be held in April/May 2020.

Budgetary and Administrative Issues:

67. At the United Nations, there is a popular saying that all roads lead to the Fifth – the “Fifth” here is the General Assembly’s main Administrative and Budgetary Committee, where all financial and programme matters concerning the UN system, are discussed. The Fifth Committee prepares the General Assembly resolutions on how much each Member State pays to the UN and how these resources are allocated. It considers the programme budget of the UN (biennial), the peacekeeping budgets (annual) and human resources issues. The Fifth Committee is also responsible for administrative matters. It considers management reform, governance, oversight and accountability issues.
68. The second resumed session of the Fifth Committee in 73rd UNGA approved the annual UN Peacekeeping budget (July 2019-June 2020) at the level of US\$6.5 billion. This is US\$501 million less than the final expenditure in 2018-19. The Secretary General’s financial reform proposals for improving cash flow situation of the organization were approved during the 73rd session. **Earlier, as part of Secretary General’s management reforms, annual budgeting was approved from 2020 onwards. The first annual budget will be approved in the 74th main session.** The upcoming session will also feature a discussion on UN’s human resource management. India will continue to work as part of the G-77 group to adequately reflect the interests and concerns of the developing countries in the budgetary provisions.
