

STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON AGENDA ITEM 62 [A] IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY [B] SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY, AND [C] FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER PERSONS: SECOND WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGENDING AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 09, 2007

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegation of India, I would like to convey to you and other members of the Bureau our warmest felicitations on your election. For me it is a special pleasure to be at this meeting presided over by you, given the close bonds of friendship and cooperation that link our two countries together. We are confident of the success that your able stewardship will bring to the Third Committee. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation in the deliberations and work of this Committee. I wish to thank the Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs for his statement yesterday in this Committee. My delegation broadly associates itself with the statement made by the Chair of 77.

Mr. Chairman,

Major UN Conferences held since the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 have underscored the role of productive employment in achieving the primary goals of the Summit, namely, of poverty eradication and promoting social development. A cursory glance at the progress made so far reveals a dismal picture.

Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered a setback since the 1990s in meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. The global labour force increased by 438 million workers to about 2.9 billion workers from 1995 to 2005; however, unemployment rose from 6% to 6.3% during the same period. Moreover, despite the fact that the global economic output increased by 3.8 percent per annum, the unemployment rate continues to rise, giving rise to the phenomenon of 'jobless growth'. Developing countries continue to register an increase in the unemployment rate.

A major challenge for a number of developing countries is to counteract jobless growth and reconcile market forces with the objective of a decent work agenda. The Kuznets Curve is a myth: inequality and high growth do not

automatically eventually lead to greater equality and social justice: direct anti-poverty programmes are necessary as a social protection measure. In addition, it is imperative that the persons working in the informal sector are also brought within the ambit of social protection systems. India is implementing the Act passed by our Parliament on Social Security for Workers in the unorganised sector. Continued dependence on agriculture and high demographic growth continues to make the challenge of full employment and decent work that much more difficult to achieve in many parts of the world.

Private enterprise mostly finds it difficult to take account of the social costs of unemployment. The UNSG's Report, therefore, rightly stresses the necessity of partnerships between Governments and the private sector particularly to explore the means to promote corporate social responsibility as an instrument for achieving productive employment and decent work for all.

The UNSG's Report also emphasizes the need for making globalisation more inclusive. Externally, globalisation means that inefficient enterprises have to close down under competitive pressure, which causes unemployment. Thus, active labour market policies empowering those marginalised from the labour market would be necessary as a means to combat social exclusion. On the other hand, liberalization of the economy has to follow a certain level of development of economic and scientific capacity. Sequencing is, therefore, critical but has often been ignored.

Mr. Chairman,

The Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has recently emphasized the 'need for a growth process that is much more inclusive, a growth process that raises incomes of the poor to bring about a much faster reduction in poverty, a growth process which generates expansion in good quality employment, and which also ensures access to essential services such as health and education for all sections of the community'.

Employment growth in India accelerated to 2.6% during 1999-2005 outpacing population growth. Employment generation, on a sustainable basis, has been one of the important objectives of India's planned economic development. India's Five Year Plans have always conceptualised productive employment for all. During the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07), particular attention was paid to the policy environment influencing a wide range of economic activities with large employment potential, such as construction, real estate and housing, transport, small scale industries, information technology as well as IT Enabled Services, financial services and tourism. It also gave high priority to micro and small enterprises, which today provides employment to 29.5 million people, apart from contributing around 39% of country's manufacturing output and about 34% of exports.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been implementing various employment as well as self-employment generation programmes, in addition to a number of poverty eradication programmes. Prominent self-employment programmes for educated and uneducated unemployed people, particularly youth and women, include *Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana*, Prime Minister's *Rozgar Yojana*, *Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana* and the Rural Employment Generation Programme. The Prime Minister's *Bharat Nirman* Scheme on the six critical areas of rural infrastructure would enhance

rural economic activities and generate both more incomes and more rural employment.

Another notable initiative launched in India in 2006 is the National Rural Employment Guarantee programme [NREGP]. It has now been extended to the entire country and is one of the largest Social Security measures in history. It makes the right to work a fundamental right by providing 100 days assured wage employment annually to every rural household, and thus creates a social safety net, infrastructure and access to health in rural areas. At least one-third of the beneficiaries of this programme would be women. Productive employment and decent work also depend on higher productivity of labour and enhancement of skills. The National Rural Health Mission is striving towards health for all. Pluralism, freedom of speech and association in a vibrant Indian democracy are crucial in satisfying some of the aspirations of working people.

Mr. Chairman,

India ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities last week, reiterating its commitment to the elimination of barriers that persons with disabilities face. It also an important step towards fulfilling a Constitutional mandate of developing an inclusive society, including persons with disabilities.

With an estimated 76.6 million older persons, India is taking a number of measures for their welfare. The National Council for Older People advises and coordinates with the Government in formulation and implementation of policies and programmes for aged people. A draft bill is under active consideration for promoting maintenance, care and protection of older persons. We are committed to the Madrid International Plan of Action, which also provides guidance on capacity-building on ageing at national, regional and international levels.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, my delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's affirmation of the need for creating an enabling environment at the international and national level as a key challenge for realising full employment and decent work. The need of the hour is to explore ways for the effective realisation of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly to halve extreme poverty by 2015 and foster social integration, by making employment a central objective of national and international macroeconomic policies.

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