



**STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON
AGENDA ITEM 10: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK
OF THE ORGANISATION AT 59TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON OCTOBER 7, 2004**

Mr. President,

We welcome this opportunity to participate in the debate under agenda item 10 on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organisation. We thank the Secretary-General for the report and the statement he made at the commencement of the general debate introducing the report. The theme of the statement on the rule of law, both at the national level and at the international level, was most welcome and timely. In a longer historical time-span, we may ask whether the UN has performed better than during the Cold War? In matters of peace and security, the results are equally, if not more, problematic. In economic matters, there is clearly a marked decline from a period when ideas like GSP, Integrated Programme for Commodities, Special Drawing Rights, Complementary and Supplementary Financing and debt forgiveness were first advanced and agreed upon in the UN and then followed up by specialised agencies. These strengthened peace and security in spite of the Cold War. However, it would be unfair to put all the blame on the UN, for the UN is only as strong as its members.

The Secretary-General's description of the year under review as "extraordinarily challenging" is most apt. The period, beginning with the commencement of military action in Iraq, its aftermath, the surge in peacekeeping operations, the threat of international terrorism and its linkages with weapons of mass destruction, has been both challenging and taxing for the United Nations system. At the same time, the increased responsibilities in dealing with the transnational issues relating to international crime, poverty, hunger, malnutrition, infectious diseases and epidemics, environmental degradation, human rights violations and humanitarian emergencies, have called upon resources and reserves that the international community has striven hard to find.

The new and onerous demands being made on the UN system are but manifestations of the post-Cold War 21st century where intra-State conflicts outnumber inter-State conflicts, where failed states place a heavy burden on their

neighbours and the international community, and where interpretations of the rule of law are consistently stretched. In the circumstances, we agree with the Secretary-General that the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change should be "bold and practicable".

Mr. President,

2005 is a crucial year in addressing the new challenges that the UN is confronted with. The coinciding of the recommendations of the High-level panel, the Millennium-plus-Five event and the 60th year of the establishment of the Organisation should provide sufficient impetus for the international community, in particular its Member States, to endow the United Nations with the strength, resources and direction required to enable it to boldly and effectively face the future that lies ahead.

We agree with the Secretary-General's view that UN reform will not be complete without Security Council reform, bringing it into line with today's realities. We do hope that the High-level Panel would take note and comprehensively address the issue of Security Council restructuring. There is a widespread view, particularly within the developing world, that the imbalance in the current composition of the Security Council is making the Council's decisions more difficult for many countries to accept and implement. Therefore the bold and practicable ideas that could emerge from the High-level panel to address the many ways and means of increasing the relevance and effectiveness of the UN in areas such as counter-terrorism, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian crises, etc., would in large measure hinge on the ability of the Panel to comprehensively and satisfactorily address the imbalance in the Council's composition.

Mr. President,

The Secretary-General has, in his report, recalled that the Charter requires the United Nations to promote the conditions of economic and social progress and development, as well as solutions to international economic, health and related problems. He has drawn attention to the increasing gap between demand and raised resources required to address natural disasters, refugee situations and other humanitarian emergencies; the fight against HIV/AIDS; the critical situation in Africa, among other responsibilities devolving on the international community.

While the UN's executive and enforcement roles in areas such as peace and security, and to some extent, in disarmament and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are paramount, many developing countries, for obvious reasons, view the UN's engagement in the social and economic sectors as seminal. The UN is regarded by developing nations as the global conscience-keeper and, as such, must preserve this role and guide the work of specialised agencies in these areas.

The report also draws attention to the role played by the UN in conflict prevention and peace-making in different parts of the world ranging from Iraq and the Middle East to Cyprus, Sudan and Asia. The case made by the Secretary-General for conflict prevention through early warning and quiet diplomacy would undoubtedly make unnecessary the major politico-military efforts to resolve them later. At the same time, the limitations in imposing preventive and peace-making services on Member States that do not want them have to be borne in mind.

The UN has had a tradition of directly addressing operational prevention through preventive diplomacy, but should also consider the enhanced implementation of a structural prevention strategy to address the political, social, cultural, economic, environmental and other structural causes that often underlie the immediate symptoms of armed conflicts. The UN system as a whole could begin to consider the mandates of its agencies, funds and programmes through a prevention lens. It could also consider strengthening its capacity to help coordinate international efforts of all actors such as Member States, International Financial Institutions, regional organisations, NGOs and the private sector to carry out structural prevention strategies.

Mr. President,

The surge in peace-keeping brings new challenges, the principal one being that of sustained commitment, both in terms of the troops and specialised military and civilian support services from countries that have men and the financial resources. Regrettably, there continues to be a lag, with almost 80% of the troops deployed in UN peace-keeping operations being contributed by the developing countries. The issues of effective planning, congruity among mandates, resources allocated and objectives to be achieved, safety and security of peace-keepers are some of the other areas of particular concern. These questions should be the subject of a constant dialogue and interaction among the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the UN Secretariat, if peace-keeping is to be effective.

The surge in peace-keeping has been accompanied by a tendency to lean towards regional solutions. Reliance on regional solutions cannot, and should not, absolve the UN of its responsibility and commitment to be the primary guarantor for the maintenance of international peace and security. While coalitions of the willing may have been authorised by the Security Council for enforcement action, in many circumstances of complex peace-keeping operations, the broadest range of capabilities available to the international community can be brought to bear only through the UN. The challenge is how best to involve regional organisations without regionalising peace-keeping.

India remains steadfast in its commitment to the ideal of promoting world peace and security; our contribution to UN peace-keeping is part of this broader strategy. We have been one of the most consistent contributors of troops to the UN, and shall continue to uphold this tradition. We shall continue to work with the Secretariat and member States in order to make peace-keeping the effective instrument that we all wish it to be.

Mr. President,

Even as countries earlier beset by conflict emerge to find peace and development, new areas of the world are faced with humanitarian emergencies of varying proportions. The efforts of the international community need to provide humanitarian solace to those areas that have recently descended into a crisis situation, while not forgetting those which no longer have the benefit of the "CNN effect".

We are, therefore, concerned that humanitarian assistance continues to be unevenly allocated and that its levels remain insufficient. We are concerned that contributions by July 2004 fulfilled only 32% of the requirements half way through the consolidated appeal period. The section under the "Funding humanitarian emergencies" provides details of the shortfalls faced by more than one agency. Even the security needs are fully funded only in the case of Iraq while many less prominent emergencies experienced a lack of security personnel, resources and assets. We endorse the Secretary-General's call to the donor community to ensure that funding for humanitarian operations is increased and is provided more consistently across humanitarian emergencies to cover the needs of all sectors. We trust, however, that this would not be accomplished at the cost of ODA and the outlays for developmental assistance.

It is heartening to note that the refugee population has decreased significantly, falling overall 20% from 2002 to the present. We have noted that in Afghanistan while more 3.5 million refugees and internally displaced persons [IDPs] have returned to their homes since the end of 2001, an estimated 180,000 IDPs and 2 million refugees still remain in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Greater political stability and protection and freedom from the continuing acts of terrorism by the resurgent remnants of Taliban would, we believe, create a more congenial atmosphere for the return of the Afghan refugees.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the impartiality and neutrality of humanitarian response must be maintained in all integrated Missions. The humanitarian function should retain its sanctity and respect by remaining apolitical, neutral and impartial. However, we believe that while certain situations may demand an integrated Mission, this should be the exception rather than the norm. Association of military personnel with the humanitarian Mission would negatively

impact the public perception of the humanitarian personnel. In a world increasingly becoming suspicious of the activities of the humanitarian arm of even the UN, posing serious security risks and concerns, it is imperative to maintain the separate character of the humanitarian function to the maximum extent possible. The basic principles for providing humanitarian assistance have been well established in resolution 46/182. Wherever the humanitarian function is performed as part of an integrated Mission, these guiding principles must be respected.

The potential of natural disasters to cause widespread havoc and destruction have been recently witnessed by us in several Caribbean countries. The economic losses caused by the natural disasters are even more difficult to bear when the victims are the poor of the developing world. Natural disasters pose a great challenge to the efforts of the developing countries for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The developing countries, especially the disaster-prone ones among them, would benefit from assistance in the area of capacity-building in early warning systems.

Mr. President,

India is steadfastly committed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We are steadily working towards this objective. Like other delegations, however, we remain concerned that the pace of achieving the MDGs remains uneven and at the current pace many parts of the world would be unable to reach the targets by 2015. We support the need for the fulfilment of MDG-8 by the development partner countries. But, ODA alone may not be enough, as capacity-building policies and strategies would also be needed in many countries, particularly in Africa.

The Secretary-General has, in his report, rightly observed that "increased and more equitable world trade holds forth the prospect of helping nations to achieve the Millennium Development goals". We share the view that the successful outcome of the Doha Work Programme would largely depend on the manner in which interests and concerns of developing countries are taken into account and on their own negotiating skills and struggle in the post-framework Agreement period.

The Secretary-General has pointed out in his report that a road map for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action on Transit Transport Cooperation among land-locked developing countries, transit developing countries, development partners, including donor countries and international financial institutions, has been prepared and validated through a meeting of United Nations

entities and agencies, including the World Bank Group. We welcome this development.

The Secretary-General has, in his report, observed water and its linkages to health, poverty reduction, gender equality, education, environmental protection and peace as crucial to sustainable development. India recognises the crucial importance of initiatives in the area of 'water and sanitation' in improving the quality of the life of the poor and has given considerable attention to water and sanitation programmes in its development plans. We share the view that the question of safe drinking water needs greater prominence, both globally and locally. The major constraints faced by the developing countries in the implementation of the agreed goals are the non-availability of financial resources and necessary technologies. These need to be addressed with a sense of urgency.

We share the view that science and technology are critical elements in our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and that there is a need to address questions of connectivity and access and to information and communication technologies and bio- technology as well as technology transfer and capacity building.

Mr. President,

The Government of India has decided to adhere to the two Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely, the protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and the protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

With regard to the establishment of Rule of Law in post-conflict situations, we concur with the view that "one-size-fits-all" approach should be avoided. The legal and cultural traditions of the local community have to play a key role in devising an approach for the re-establishment of Rule of Law. Involvement of local actors and legal professionals, therefore, could provide a lasting solution rather than implanting outside expertise which is unsuitable for local conditions. In terms of the UN Charter the General Assembly should debate this and many other themes.

Mr. President,

The provision of safety and security to UN personnel both in headquarters and in the field has acquired urgency. While we note that some interim measures have been taken in this area, ad hoc approaches bring about a false sense of complacency and, in the long term, are bound to be counter-productive. We await the report of the Secretary-General mandated in Resolution 58/295 and hope that it will take a comprehensive and long-term view of this subject and propose a coherent plan of action involving all entities concerned.

We are disappointed to note that there has not been much progress on the Capital Master Plan over the last year. The principal stumbling block continues to be in the area of financing for the project. We would need to address this issue with some urgency in this session.

Reform of the Planning, Programming and Budgeting cycle mandated by the General Assembly during its last session has resulted in the preparation of a new Strategic Framework for the Organisation to replace the Medium Term Plan. We do hope that with a shorter time horizon of two years and with the plan now being co-terminus with the Budget, it would lead to better planning and delivery of mandated activities and for greater accountability of programme managers.

It is unfortunate that regular budget contributions during the last year fell behind previous years. Some peacekeeping missions are perennially short of funds. At the same time, the UN faces an unprecedented surge in new peacekeeping demands. This makes it critical for Member States to make full and timely payment of assessed contributions. Professed commitment to the United Nations by Member States needs to be backed up by living up to the obligations.

We shall provide more detailed comments on various issues before this session under the respective agenda items.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)