

Agenda Item 20 (b): Special Economic Assistance to Mozambique

Statement by Mr. Satyabrata Pal, APR, on March 10, 2000

Mr. President,

Thank you for calling this meeting of the General Assembly to consider what the international community can do to show its solidarity with the people of Mozambique.

May I begin by conveying our deepest sympathies to the people of Mozambique. On behalf of the Government of India, Prime Minister Vajpayee has conveyed to President Chissano the heartfelt condolences of the government and the people of India.

Through bilateral channels, we have sent Rs. 1 million worth of medicines to Mozambique as our immediate contribution to the relief efforts, and will consult with the Government of Mozambique on what more we can do.

May I also convey through you, Mr. President, our deepest admiration for the courage and resilience which the people of Mozambique have shown, faced by this enormous disaster, and for the dedication and energy with which the Government of Mozambique has taken up the challenge of meeting the immediate needs of rescue and relief, and the longer term task of rehabilitation.

As we were reminded in the briefings which we received yesterday from representatives of the UN system at the very timely meeting of ECOSOC organised by its President, the international community, which has responded swiftly and generously in Mozambique's hour of crisis, must stay the course. The tasks of rehabilitation and reconstruction will be as daunting as those of immediate relief. The danger is that, as the floods recede, so might international attention, not least from the media. It is important that all friends of Mozambique continue to provide the support that its government and people will need as they set about rebuilding after the disaster.

We are honoured, Mr. President, to be a co-sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/54/L.79 submitted to this Assembly.