

STATEMENT BY MR. SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSIAN, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 134 – 'FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS' AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 23, 2009



We thank the Under Secretary-General for the Department of Management for her statement on the financial situation of the United Nations. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement made by the Distinguished Representative of the Sudan on behalf of Group of 77.

My delegation believes that payment of assessed contributions by Member States, in full, on time, and without conditions, is not just a charter obligation but also a moral one. We also advocate that favorable consideration should be accorded to those Member States that are unable to pay their assessed contributions due to circumstances beyond their control.

As we seek full accountability from the Secretariat for efficient and effective implementation of mandates given by Member States, we are also duty-bound to provide the Secretariat with timely and adequate resources to ensure the attainment of that goal.

Regarding the regular budget, it is unfortunate that as on 13 October 2009, the unpaid assessed contributions amounted to US\$ 830 million, which is US\$ 74 million higher than in October 2008. Moreover, this amount is highly concentrated with 93% being owed by a single Member State and 7% by the rest. We all agree that a financially weak Organization is not in our interest. We hope that this situation would be addressed urgently by the concerned parties.

I would also like to take this opportunity to set the record straight that though India's name is missing from the list of Member States that have fully paid their assessment for regular budget, my country has, in fact, paid in full its assessed contribution for the regular budget on 31 March 2009. I hope the Secretariat would rectify this omission at the earliest.

Mr. Chairman,

As a major troop contributing country, which also has significant contingent-owned equipment deployed with UN peacekeeping operations, we are encouraged by the decrease in total amount of peacekeeping assessment outstanding to US\$ 2.1 billion, which is US\$ 796 million below the level in October 2008, even though the some of the decrease is related to lower level of assessments issued for this peacekeeping fiscal pending the approval of a new scale of assessments for 2010.

We acknowledge that the amount of unpaid assessments is partially due to the peacekeeping financial cycle. However a major portion is because of non-payment by some Member States. As in the regular budget, the unpaid assessments for peacekeeping operations are highly concentrated, with 53% owed by just two member states.

The delay in receipt of contributions from Member States adversely impacts the Secretariat's capacity to make quarterly payments to troop and COE contributors of peacekeeping operations. India's contribution of troops and contingent-owned equipment to UN peacekeeping operations is not a commercial venture. It is a manifestation of India's commitment to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter. However, once a formal MOU, defining terms and conditions of our participation in UN peacekeeping operations has been signed with the United Nations, we are justified in expecting that all parties to the agreement fulfill their legal obligations.

Delayed payment, sometimes non-payment of troop costs and contingent-owned equipment reimbursements, as in some closed peacekeeping missions, reflects poorly on the United Nations. It also makes it difficult for the troop contributing countries to

explain to national legislatures, why such debt is owed to them by the United Nations. This situation must be rectified otherwise it could have a negative impact on Member States' commitment towards future peacekeeping operations.

The projection of US\$ 944 million, as the amount of United Nations debt to Member States at the end of 2009 is higher than envisaged in May 2009. India is owed US\$ 152 million as on 30 September 2009. We understand the Secretariat's compulsion and are willing to be patient in this matter. However, some who seek greater financial contributions by my country to the Organization should factor in this debt while measuring India's contributions.

An indebted United Nations should not be expected to evoke confidence from the peoples it aspires to serve. It is, therefore, essential that Member States assist the Organization in achieving zero indebtedness, as an integral part of our common quest for prudent budgetary and financial management.

Last week, the Under Secretary-General for Management in her statement said that the financial indicators of the United Nations for 2009 are mixed. While unpaid assessments have decreased for peacekeeping operations, there have been increases for the regular budget, the tribunals and the capital master plan. The number of Member States meeting their obligations in full is lower that one year ago across all categories. Acknowledging that the financial well-being of the United Nations is in our common interest, we add our voice in urging all Member States to pay their financial obligations in full and on time. My delegation would do the same.

Thank you!

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