



STATEMENT BY MR. KIRIP CHALIHA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND
MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION ON AGENDA ITEM:77
“COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING
OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS” IN THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF 59TH
SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 27, 2004.

Mr Chairman,

We welcome the opportunity to participate in discussions under agenda item 77: *“Comprehensive Review of the whole question of Peace keeping Operations in all their aspects.”* We thank Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for his presentation and for the frank exchange of views that ensued. We associate ourselves with the statement by the distinguished representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr Chairman,

The recent surge in peace-keeping operations has given rise to new challenges, more demands and some risks. A robust military presence is considered essential during the initial stages of a peace-keeping operation in order to deter spoilers and establish UN’s credibility. Particularly, in the intra-state peace-keeping of today, armed elements may only partially be under the control of those who consented to UN’s deployment. The United Nations must have the ability to deliver a fitting response in the face of such challenges, both to keep spoilers at bay, but also to keep the initiative and, if challenged, to defend itself and the mandate. Such a capability is essential to project credibility. The Indian delegation supports this new muscular or “robust” aspect in peace-keeping in UN’s quest to keep the peace.

Mr Chairman,

We agree that under the current concept of peace-keeping, UN’s activities in the maintenance of international peace and security form a continuum from conflict prevention to peace-keeping and peace-building. We also agree that peace-keeping elements should be incorporated into the new multi-disciplinary peace-keeping operations from the outset to ensure a seamless transition, from the one to the other. Where we disagree is the tendency to confuse peace-keeping with peace-building. Peace-keeping is short-term, designed to perform a series of specific tasks. Post-conflict peace-building, on the other hand, is longer-term, best left to the Agencies, Funds and

Programmes of the UN system and, in the final analysis, must be locally-owned. Post-conflict peace-building cannot be achieved through peace-keepers who do not have the experience or the training, resources or capabilities, to undertake post-conflict reconciliation, reconstruction and development. What they can do, however, is to lay a vital foundation for the purpose, particularly if they embody, in their outlook and behaviour, a long-standing democratic and multi-cultural tradition.

The rule of law has come to occupy a centrality within the context of post-conflict peace-building. Most recently, this issue has been dealt with by the Secretary-General in his report on “*Rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post conflict societies*” (document S/2004/616). We cannot but agree with him on the need to eschew a one-size-fits-all-approach, as also the emphasis on basing UN’s work on national assessments, national participation and national needs and aspirations. Equally, the tendency to impose foreign models must be eschewed, taking into account a society’s socio-cultural specificities and particularities, so that the support rendered by the international community becomes durable and sustainable. The UN should restrict itself to playing a supportive and facilitating role, without seeking to impose an outside optic, or values of any particular country or group of countries, on the delicate process of establishing the rule of law.

Mr Chairman,

Peace-keeping has witnessed a trend by UN in recent years to lean towards regional solutions, often forced, owing to its financial stringency or UN’s own inability to muster enough enthusiasm from Member States for operations far removed. While in some cases, coalitions of the willing, authorised by the Security Council, may be a better expedient for vigorous enforcement action, nevertheless, in many other circumstances of complex peace-keeping operations, it is only through the UN that the broadest range of capabilities available to the international community can be brought to bear. The tendency to parcel or “sub-contract” should not be at the expense of UN peace-keeping, which through its universality enjoys a unique legitimacy and, through its experience, built over decades, enjoys a formidable degree of expertise. Above all, reliance on regional solutions, even when under Chapter VIII, cannot, and should not, absolve the Security Council of its primary responsibility under the Charter to be the guarantor for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr Chairman,

The concept of *Rapid Deployment* has enjoyed somewhat limited success in practical terms. The United Nations Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) and the on-call lists are testimony to this. The need, however, to deploy rapidly and effectively remains critical. While we appreciate the need on the part of the UN to make attempts to solve emerging problems in peace-keeping, these must be preceded by a thorough discussion and agreement in appropriate inter-governmental forums, before these can be implemented. The foundations of such structures should necessarily be built on mutually beneficial terms and conditions – as much for UN as for the Troop-Contributing-

Countries. We look forward to a thorough discussion on these and related issues within the rubric of Rapid Deployment in the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations.

The safety and security of UN and associated personnel, particularly in the field, continues to be an area of critical concern to my delegation. We are in agreement with the assessment of the Department of Peace-Keeping Operations that security must not be viewed as a stand-alone function within a Mission or be narrowly defined. Rather, it cuts across all activities, ranging from planning to contingency response, thus forming an integral part of mandate implementation. We have advocated all along that, even as we enhance our capacities to gather intelligence and assess the risks, the best insurance against such risks is a properly planned and mandated mission, comprising well-trained, equipped and disciplined contingents that are not deployed in a void or where the political process is either non-existent or compromised for lesser interests.

Mr Chairman,

India has been one of the leading proponents of triangular cooperation among the troop contributing countries (TCCs), the Security Council and the Secretariat. This can be achieved through a better understanding of each other's concerns, the Council and the Secretariat, in particular, of the TCCs, which are best placed to convey an assessment of the ground situation, based on first-hand experience. TCCs must be involved early and fully in the planning of a peace-keeping mission: during its implementation stage, as its mandate is renewed, changed or terminated and when there is a rapid deterioration in the situation on ground, particularly when it threatens the safety and security of UN peace-keepers. We call for a greater interface with the Security Council through the reactivation of the joint mechanism provided for in the note of 14 January, 2002 from the President of the Security Council. At the same time, we also call for an intensification of the dialogue between the TCCs and the Secretariat, to ensure that when the latter reports to the Security Council, it conveys to them what the Council needs to know and not what it wants to hear.

Mr Chairman,

India's contribution to UN peace-keeping is unique: we have contributed a total of over 70,000 troops, participated in 38 missions and have on 109 occasions, made the supreme sacrifice. For most of this period, we have headed the list of troop contributors and have participated in almost every UN peace-keeping mission, particularly in Africa. We have a wealth of accumulated experience and an unswerving commitment. It is in this spirit that we participate in today's discussions to forge peace-keeping into a stronger and more effective tool in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS