

Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, at the
Meeting of the Adhoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly on
13 July 2010

Madam Co-Chair,

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation for the leadership displayed by you (Ambassador Sanja Štiglic of Slovenia) and your co-chair (Ambassador Jorge Argüello of Argentina) in guiding our deliberations on the Revitalization of the General Assembly till this important stage. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki for his leadership and commitment to carry forward this process.

Madam Co-Chair,

Let me at the outset, align myself with the statement delivered by Algeria on behalf of the NAM. The report and resolution which are at the draft stage are works in progress and we look forward to active interaction with the rest of the UN membership on this important and vital matter.

I take the floor to restate India's positions on the various themes. It is our expectation that these views will find their fullest expression in the report and resolution that the General Assembly finally adopts.

Madam Co-Chair,

India has consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and in spirit. The General Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues. This was the role intended for the Assembly in Article 10 of the UN Charter, namely that it discuss any questions or matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the

powers and functions of any organs provided for in the Charter, i.e. the Security Council, the ECOSOC, Trusteeship Council, the ICJ as well as the Secretariat.

Madam Co-Chair,

On the role and authority of the General Assembly, we are of the view that the Security Council would do well to eschew the tendency to give extremely creative and permissive interpretations to the consideration of what constitutes a threat to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression and to the situations under which it can take action under Chapter VII. And in terms of its reporting obligations, the Council should not only inform the Assembly of the decisions taken, but also the rationale, efficacy and impact of the Council's decisions, in terms of crystallized take-aways for the membership. At the same time the Assembly must also take remedial measures that extend beyond merely strengthening procedures. Foremost in this regard is the need to properly appreciate and then correctly situate the Assembly within the plurality of multilateral mechanisms that deal with global issues. We also call for enhancing the oversight role of the Assembly vis-à-vis the UN staff and as reflected in the working of the Fifth Committee.

We welcome the provisions in the draft resolution under the heading of "role and authority of the General Assembly" and look forward to close and constructive cooperation with others in the days to come so that we get a solution that truly strengthens the role of the General Assembly.

On the issue of the Role and Responsibilities of the General Assembly in the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, we are of the view that General Assembly Resolution 11 (1) of February 1946 which lays out the "Terms of appointment of the Secretary-General" was the product of an era gone by. It was the result of irreconcilable differences between the pre-eminent yet opposing power camps in the international system on the implementation of Article 97 of the Charter. We live in a different period of international relations. Being the voice of the international community, the General Assembly must have a greater say in the process of selection of the Secretary General. In this regard, there are a number of important elements that the UN membership can consider as medium-term measures that could be applied the next time the post of Secretary General becomes vacant. For instance, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 51/241 of 22 August 1997 and 60/286 of 9 October 2006, which outline in detail proposals on improving the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary-General. Further, the practice established by GA Resolution 11 (1) can be modified to allow for the Council to send a panel of names that the Assembly could choose from as against a single nomination. Additionally, if the member-states attach high importance to the role and responsibilities of the Assembly, we see no reason why the matter should not be "decided by a two-thirds majority" in terms of Article 18 (3) as against the one with a simple majority requirement in Resolution 11 (1). We could also identify objective criteria for the candidatures, including commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, extensive leadership, administrative and diplomatic experience with due regard being given to regional rotation and gender equality.

Equally useful and practical would be to encourage formal presentation of candidatures in a manner that allows sufficient time for interaction with member-states, and also requires candidates to present their views to all member-states of the General Assembly.

Madam Co-Chair,

I am personally acutely conscious of the fact that setting extremely ambitious targets will not necessarily result in forward movement. Actual progress takes place in small incremental steps and in this regard I would like to stress the need for applying some of these procedures suggested in the case of appointments to heads of specialized agencies. We could consider such interaction of the candidates with the General Assembly at least for a limited purpose of outlining their programme as they envisage, if appointed.

On the matter of the office of the President of the General Assembly, we call for providing the resources that are in keeping with the aura and dignity of that high office. Particularly, we need to address the inadequacy of the current annual budget allocation of US\$ 250,000. We would also like to know what the system of extra-budgetary support has been so far and how it has been operating in the past. We call upon the UN system to provide for the basic requirements of protocol and security. We also support other appropriate measures that will strengthen this august office.

Provisions in the draft resolution under the heading of "strengthening the office of the President of the General Assembly" are reflective of the consensus thinking which is emerging through deliberations. We welcome other delegations to support the same.

Madam Co-Chair,

India is no stranger to the application of newer and modern technologies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of electoral processes. In our considered view, the revitalization process of the General Assembly will benefit immensely if we are able to introduce those technologies that are efficient, and that ensure the security and confidentiality of the voting process. Finally, we are of the view that resolutions of the General Assembly in general and those on revitalization in particular have special significance both for the member states and the international community.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the Indian delegation attaches importance to the on-going processes of revitalization of the General Assembly, including the various aspects of strengthening of its procedures, working methods, documentation and also ensuring due follow up. We will continue our active support and continue to be there to help you in these efforts. And let me once again express appreciation for the work that you are doing and we hope that your efforts would result in a landmark resolution this year under your leadership.

Thank you.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)