

Statement by Mr. A. Gopinathan, Deputy Permanent Representative, on Agenda Item 44: culture of peace after adoption of resolution A/58/L.52 in plenary of the 58th session of United Nations General Assembly on December 19, 2003

Mr. President,

My delegation has sought the floor to make a general statement after the adoption of the resolution contained in document A/ 58/L.52 entitled "Promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and co-operation" under agenda item 44: Culture of peace.

My delegation has gone along with the adoption of the resolution without a vote in spite of the shortcomings and deficiencies perceived by us in the text. We would like to refer to them briefly.

When the idea was first proposed in the 57th session, we had been told that this was 'as a first step' in the collective fight of the international community against global terrorism. It is unfortunate that the sponsors refused to include in the text any reference to the global combat against terrorism.

The resolution does not lay adequate emphasis, in our view, on the need to promote actively ideas of tolerance, pluralism and respect for diversity.

The resolution falls seriously short in dealing with the question of promoting educational policies and programmes, teaching methods and curricula that discourage ideologies of extremism, intolerance and violence, and actively promote values of non-discrimination, diversity, tolerance, pluralism, understanding and respect for each other's religion, faith and belief.

In India's view, the resolution does not address itself adequately to the need for strengthening democracy and democratic institutions as one of the most effective means of promoting religious and cultural understanding. Effective democratic institutions which are fully participatory will help avoid marginalisation and exclusion of, and discrimination against, specific sections of society.

It is regrettable that the sponsors did not incorporate these issues in the resolution, notwithstanding the fact that language from Declarations and resolutions in

the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and UNESCO exists and was made available to them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)