

**Permanent Mission of India  
New York**

--

**UN Security Council Open Debate on  
'Reaffirming International Rule of Law: Pathways to Reinvigorating Peace,  
Justice, and Multilateralism'**

**Statement by Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, Permanent Representative**

26 January 2026

Mr. President,

I congratulate Somalia for assuming Presidency of the Security Council for the month and thank you for convening today's Open Debate.

2. The theme of today's debate bears immense significance in the current context and the ongoing geopolitical developments. The Rule of law is at the very heart of the core mandate of the United Nations Security Council- maintenance of international peace and security. It is critical to addressing conflicts and fostering trust among Member States.

3. The multilateralism of universal membership, with the United Nations at its core, is under strain. The challenges facing this organization go far beyond the budgetary realm. Paralysis and lack of effectiveness in tackling conflicts remain a significant shortcoming. People around the world do not perceive the United Nations as an organization that delivers on international peace and security. Conversations and discussions have moved on to parallel plurilateral frameworks, some even involving private sector actors, to bring about outcomes on peace and security outside the United Nations framework.

4. Today's debate provides a timely opportunity to reflect upon some of these challenges, identify the causative factors and explore means to reinvigorate peace, justice and multilateralism.

5. At the outset, I would like to highlight that India upholds the rule of law as a cornerstone of its national governance, enshrined in its Constitution and reinforced through the independence of its judiciary and initiatives that expand access to justice. These deep roots of rule of law in India at the national level inform and guide our commitment towards Rule of Law at the international level.

Mr. President

6. India would like to make the following points in this backdrop:

First, the rule of law is barren without enforceability. The focus must shift from arcane constructs to pragmatic solutions and outcomes that positively impact the daily lives of our citizens.

Second, the world is changing and transforming at a rapid pace across different domains. The legal and institutional framework governing international rule of law must keep up with this rapidly transforming landscape. Continuous review, updation and reinvigoration are an imperative to avoid obsolescence.

Third, for multilateralism and international rule of law to remain effective and credible, global governance structures must evolve to reflect contemporary realities. The current architecture of the United Nations, particularly the composition of the Security Council, reflects a geopolitical reality of a bygone era. In light of the profound global transformation of the last eight decades in power dynamics, demographics, and the nature of global challenges, there is an urgent and compelling need to undertake comprehensive reform including expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories. Such reform is essential to enhance the

Council's legitimacy and ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing the present day challenges.

Fourth, identifying and building on synergies among the principal organs of the UN would help in advancing rule of law. This could result in greater alignment between mandates, avoiding duplication, leading to enhanced impact. Process-oriented reforms are instrumental for achieving these ends. Predictable and adequate resource provision, capacity-building and technical assistance tailored to local contexts are key elements of these reforms.

Fifth, international rule of law should not be weaponized to question state sovereignty and interfere in internal affairs of states. International law principles from the colonial era that have helped in self-determination and emergence of new Member States from colonial rule should not be weaponized to attack the unity and territorial integrity of states. Contexts and situations are ever changing and if multilateralism treats outcomes and solutions as immutable and cast in stone and unable to pragmatically adapt to change, it would be an impetus for alternate formats of engagement to emerge.

Finally, the application of international rule of law calls for consistency, objectivity and predictability with no double standards.

Mr. President,

7. I now respond to the comments of the Representative of Pakistan, an elected member of the Security Council which has a single point agenda – to harm my country and my people.

8. He has advanced a false and self-serving account of Operation Sindoor in May last year. The facts on this matter are clear. Pakistan-sponsored terrorists killed 26 innocent civilians in a brutal attack in Pahalgam in April 2025. This august body itself called for holding the

perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism accountable and brought to justice. That is exactly what we did.

9. India's actions were measured, non-escalatory, and responsible, and focused on dismantling the terrorist infrastructure and disabling terrorists. Till 9<sup>th</sup> of May, Pakistan was threatening more attacks on India. But on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, the Pakistani military called our military directly and pleaded for a cessation to the fighting. The destruction caused to multiple Pakistani airbases by the Indian operation, including images of destroyed runways and burnt-out hangars, are in the public domain.

10. We have heard talk from the Representative of Pakistan about the new normal. Let me reiterate again that terrorism can never be normalized as Pakistan wishes to do. It is not normal to tolerate Pakistan's continued use of terrorism as an instrument of state policy. This hallowed chamber cannot become a forum for Pakistan to legitimize terrorism. We will do whatever required to protect and ensure the safety and security of our citizens.

11. Furthermore, Pakistan has no locus standi to comment on matters that are internal to India. The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is, and will always remain an integral and inalienable part of India.

12. India had entered into the Indus Waters Treaty 65 years ago in good faith, in a spirit of goodwill and friendship. Throughout these six and a half decades, Pakistan has violated the spirit of the Treaty by inflicting three wars and thousands of terror attacks on India. Thousands of Indian lives have been lost in Pakistan-sponsored terror attacks. India was compelled to finally announce that the Treaty will be held in abeyance until Pakistan, a global epicentre of terror, credibly and irrevocably ends its support for cross-border and all other forms of terrorism.

13. Pakistan is well advised to introspect about the rule of law. It could start by asking itself how it has let its armed forces engineer a constitutional coup through the 27<sup>th</sup> amendment and giving life-time immunity to its Chief of Defence Forces.

14. In conclusion, India would like to reiterate that strengthening the international rule of law framework and reforming multilateralism are a strategic necessity for the United Nations to effectively discharge its responsibilities with regard to maintenance of international peace and security.

I thank you, Mr. President.