

General Debate of the Second Committee

INDIA STATEMENT

By Shri N.K. Premchandran, Hon'ble Member of Parliament

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Thank you Mr. President,

We congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on assumption of charge of the Second Committee.

We associate with the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and would like to make some additional points in our national capacity.

Mr. President,

We have embarked on the journey towards achievement of Agenda 2030 adopted three years ago. More than 110 Member States, including my country, have presented our Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in the last three years, as we have moved from the phase of 'Precept' to the stage of 'Practice' to achieving these goals.

India's External Affairs Minister, during her address to the 73rd General Assembly, assured that India is on the right trajectory to achieve the SDGs ahead of schedule.

India has fully supported the Secretary-General's reform proposals for UN Development System for it to help countries in their efforts to achieve SDGs. We call upon the traditional donors to step up their voluntary contributions for timely operationalisation of the 'Reinvigorated RC System', which is at the heart of the reformed UNDS.

Mr. President,

India's national policies are in sync with the SDGs in focusing on poverty eradication, healthcare, education, gender, skills and employment, and infrastructure development, among others.

The issue of Water and Sanitation is essential to achieving all the SDGs, particularly those on health, nutrition, sustainable cities and gender equality. In 2014, India launched the largest sanitation and hygiene program in the world - the Clean India Mission, with the objective of make India open defecation free and achieve scientific waste management by 2 October 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi. Four years ago, 60% of the global population defecating in open was in India, today it has been reduced to 20%.

Last week, addressing the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention, attended by leaders from more than 50 countries in New Delhi, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that 2.3 billion people worldwide lacked basic sanitary facilities. He highlighted that the ongoing efforts in India are rapidly changing these statistics.

Mr. President,

India is not only pursuing an inclusive development, one that empowers the marginalized and vulnerable; but also one that is less energy intensive.

India is also taking bold and ambitious climate action towards renewable energy transition. By 2022, India plans to produce 175 GW of renewable energy that will include 100 GW of solar power.

The International Solar Alliance, championed by India and France, now joined by 70 nations and established with UN as a multilateral treaty, is making ambitious strides for making tangible contribution to the global efforts on climate action.

UNEP has conferred Prime Minister Modi with the Champion of the Earth Award in recognition of his leadership and the work done by India, especially in new areas of cooperation in promoting solar power and renewable energy, and environmental action, including the pledge to eliminate all single-use plastics by 2022.

Mr. President

In my home state Kerala in India, the Cochin International Airport has showed the world that big infrastructure projects like airports can be commercially viable while fully relying on solar power. This will avoid CO2 emissions by more than 900,000 tonnes over the next 25 years, which is equivalent to planting 9 million trees. This will also result in saving of USD 6 million per year. UNEP has also recognized this achievement with the Champion of the Earth award.

Mr. President,

India is actively engaged with the preparatory process of Global Compact on Migration and we look forward to an outcome which strengthens International Migration's link with sustainable development.

In the spirit of global partnership, we look forward to BAPA+40 Conference on South-South Cooperation. Here at the UN, last year, India established the India-UN Development Partnership Fund stepping up its efforts towards South-South cooperation. A sum of US\$ 150 million has been committed for the next decade focusing on the developmental projects in LDCs and SIDS.

Responding to the call of the Addis Agenda, India has continued its contribution to the UN Tax Trust Fund for the second successive year. We have also contributed to the trust funds for Technology Bank for LDCs and for organisation of the mid-term review of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs.

Mr. President,

We wish you all success in all your endeavours. You can count on the unstinted support of my delegation for the successful conduct of work of this Committee in the weeks ahead.

I thank you.
