

74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Agenda 15: Culture of Peace

INDIA STATEMENT By Ms. Paulomi Tripathi First Secretary

12 December 2019

Madam President,

“That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.”

These words were enshrined into the Constitution of UNESCO more than seven decades ago at a time the world was emerging from the gloomy shadows of the two World Wars.

Since then, under the auspices of the United Nations, promotion of culture of peace has grown into a global discourse. Within this framework, peace embraces far more than an absence of conflict. Promotion of tolerance, disarmament, sustainable economic and social development, democratic ethos, gender equality and respect for human rights and dignity play key role.

There is recognition that transition from a culture of war to a Culture of Peace entails transformation of individual behavior and institutional practices. What begins with the development of inner peace and scientific temper, permeates into collective conscience and get embodied into institutions.

Education and awareness generation play a key roles in this process. This is particularly relevant in the context of development of children and young people. A large section of them suffer from poverty and inequality and are vulnerable to radicalization and violent mobilizations.

We need to galvanize efforts to use quality education and sustainable development as tools for addressing their vulnerabilities. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda is pivotal in this regard.

We welcome the successful holding of the High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace on 13 September 2019 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action. It was an occasion to reaffirm our collective resolve to forge wide-ranging partnerships in promoting culture of peace.

We appreciate the efforts of Bangladesh in presenting the resolution on the follow-up of the Declaration and Programme of Action (A/74/L.23), which we have cosponsored.

Inter-religious and intercultural dialogues through engagement of faith leaders, civil society and academia are important for building intellectual and moral solidarity. We welcome various efforts of the UN and the Member States in this pursuit.

Spirit of cooperation is the crux of the culture of peace.
This agenda should not be misused and trivialized for political propaganda.

We need to be particularly cautious when the fox is guarding the henhouse.

Attempts by one delegation to misuse this agenda hardly comes as a matter of surprise for those of who have witnessed their many attempts to masquerade as the champions of culture of peace. They besmirch the spirit of cooperation by spinning false narratives for political gains.

In reality footprint of every major act of international terrorism passes through this country. Terrorists are 'trained' in their safe havens to take innocent lives. Children and youth are given guns instead of books, women are oppressed and minorities are persecuted.

Virulent terror emanating from this territory threaten to destabilize peace globally. Yet, with pathological obsession this delegation makes veiled baseless allegations on internal situations of other countries.

Our position on such allegations are well known. We firmly reject these baseless allegations.

The international community has not paid attention to such deceitful propaganda for coveting territory. We are confident that this would be the case in future as well.

Madam President,

Today we have come to recognize that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men. Full and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels is indispensable in the quest for peace.

We need to enhance meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Their experiences and priorities must contribute to long-term stability. We need to convert our aspirations into actions in synergistic manner. Commemoration of 25 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and 40 years of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, provide opportunities to reaffirm our resolve for collective action.

Madam President,

India, the largest democracy in the world, is also the second most populous nation.

Our civilizational legacy treats nature as a source of nurture. There is high value placed on living in harmony with nature. The Vedas are a repository for holistic development of the human-being in harmony with their surroundings. Practice of yoga helps in achieving inner peace.

India is the home to very significant number of practitioners of practically every other major religion of the world. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism or the Bahai faith.

Gautam Buddha gave his first sermon in Sarnath in India. His message of peace continues to inspire thought and action of millions across the globe.

This year we celebrate 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji, the founder of Sikhism. His teachings continue appeal to devotees of different faith.

The history of India, in essence, is a narrative of conversations between different civilizations and, indeed, conversation with nature itself.

The enduring principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" i.e. "the entire world is one family" has guided our interactions and exchange of thoughts with the world.

We, in India, understand the importance of building alliances between religions, cultures and ethnic groups. We have always supported all efforts to build bridges of understanding between nations, peoples, religions and cultures across the world.

As the culture of peace agenda gains salience in a world riven by inequality, violence and mistrust, we remain deeply committed to its full implementation.

I thank you.