

**STATEMENT BY MR. V.K. NAMBIAR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON
ITEM 60: FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOME OF THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, ITEM-10 : REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION AT THE
58TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 6, 2003**

Mr. President,

I would like to convey to you the appreciation of my delegation for the considerable efficiency with which you have been conducting the work of this session.

The Secretary General has presented a comprehensive report on the activities of the Organisation during the past year. He has also presented an important report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. During the general debate last week, many world leaders have emphasised that the events of the past few months especially in Iraq have shaken some of the fundamental assumptions governing the working of this organisation. Not only have some of these developments cast a shadow on the legitimacy of the world organisation as representing the aspirations and concerns of the world community at large rather than just a part of it but it has reopened the broader debate of the future path this organisation must tread. We agree with the Secretary-General that the present juncture represents both a challenge and an opportunity for the international community to address meaningfully the need for urgent reforms of the institutions and the processes of the UN.

We pay special tribute to the late Sergio Viera de Mello for his selfless and dedicated efforts on behalf of the UN to assist Iraq in its return to normalcy. Sergio de Mello and the colleagues who laid down their lives in Baghdad on August 19 2003 served in the finest traditions of the international civil service and their loss will be irreparable to the Organisation. We sincerely condole this loss even as we condemn the senseless terrorist attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad.

India endorses the Secretary General's call for the early restoration of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people. We hope the requisite conditions, including appropriate security and political measures, for the active re-engagement of the United Nations in Iraq would be forthcoming. We believe that the UN should play a crucial role in the process of political and economic reconstruction of Iraq.

Mr. President,

The Secretary General has, in his reports, correctly focused on the "hard" threats from terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. These threats are real, imminent and can not be ignored. The pro-active approach of the United Nations in combating the global threat of terrorism has been evident in the functioning of the 1373 (Counter-Terrorism) and 1267 (Taliban and Al-Qaeda) Committees of the Security Council. However, given the increasing reach and ability of terrorist networks to disrupt the orderly functioning of society and threaten the lives and livelihoods of large numbers of people worldwide, the international community needs to accelerate, through practical and realistic measures, the pace of its collective actions to meet the challenge posed by terrorists and their sponsors.

The Secretary General has referred to new terrorist attacks in different parts of the world. These incidents only reinforce the view that no religion remains immune to such attacks. There can be no justification in connecting any particular religion with terrorism, nor can any political, territorial, religious or ideological rationalisation be used to justify the killing of innocent men, women and children in terrorist attacks.

In his two Reports, the Secretary General has stressed the need to combat terrorism while ensuring full compliance with established human rights and other international norms. We fully agree with this view. But, it is equally important to note that States are accountable for their actions through their international and domestic obligations, legal and otherwise. Every member state of the United Nations is fully aware of these obligations. Governments of member states that form part of democratic polities additionally find their policies subjected to the periodic scrutiny of their people, to whom they are ultimately accountable. On the other hand, a disproportionate emphasis upon this area of a member states' actions could serve as an unintended handle for non-state actors who seek to evade responsibility for their own action. It does also, however unwittingly, seem to place rule-abiding member States and lawless terrorist outfits on the same plane. It must be remembered that these outfits and their adherents are accountable to none for their mindless terrorism and violate the most basic of human rights of their hapless victims, namely, their right to life.

The Secretary General has pointed out that in the 25th anniversary of SSOD-I, there has been little forward movement on multilateral disarmament

issues. India has consistently pursued the objective of global disarmament based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and effective compliance. We strongly emphasise that the Conference on Disarmament must be allowed to play its mandated role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

The increased peril of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists is also highlighted in the Secretary General's report. Recognising this concern, last year India initiated a resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", which was adopted by consensus. We propose to introduce an updated version of this resolution at the current session of the UNGA for adoption with the support of all concerned.

In recent years, the Security Council has increasingly resorted to the use of sanctions as a tool for promoting and maintaining international peace and security. We fully concur with the Secretary General that while sanctions should maximise pressure on their intended targets, they should not adversely impact on innocent civilian populations or third countries. In this context, the work of the Interlaken, Bonn-Berlin and Stockholm processes have been invaluable in refining the instruments of international sanctions. It is our view that similar efforts need to be undertaken to further improve sanctions against terrorist groups and non-State actors.

Mr. President,

While presenting his report on the work of the Organisation at the beginning of the General Debate, the Secretary-General announced his intention to establish a high-level panel of eminent personalities, entrusted with the task of reviewing and making recommendations on strengthening the United Nations through reforming its institutions and processes. Almost every speaker in the General Debate has welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General. We reiterate our support to the Secretary-General for his efforts at initiating a process of far-reaching reforms of the Organisation, its institutions and processes. We stand ready to cooperate with other member States in carrying forward the efforts of the Secretary-General in this regard.

The Secretary General has pointed out that the Security Council must garner the widest possible support for its decisions and actions, and that this can only be achieved if it is perceived to be broadly representative of the international community and geopolitical realities of the contemporary world. He has also drawn attention to the fact that the enlargement of the Security Council has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for over a decade. For the decisions of the United Nations, in general, and the Security Council, in particular, to carry international credibility and indeed, legitimacy, expansion of the Security Council is imperative. Expansion should take place both at

permanent and non-permanent levels to include countries that represent significant sections of the world population, economic aspirations, political values and commitment to the United Nations system. We should take advantage of the opportunity afforded to us by the Secretary General's proposals and the receptivity of a large number of Member States to this idea, to forge ahead in the interests of multilateralism and collective international decision-making.

During the current session of the General Assembly, my delegation looks forward to advancing the agenda for further change in the Organisation. The General Assembly has called for reports on several of the proposals and we remain ready to consider them actively in the relevant intergovernmental forums.

Mr President

We would like to express satisfaction at the role played by the United Nations in the coordination of humanitarian assistance. The Consolidated Appeal Process is a useful tool and the on-going process of strengthening it further should, we feel, also lead to more adequate and equitable funding of humanitarian crises. At the same time, we are somewhat uneasy with the blurring of the mandate of the organisations of the development system which has taken place in recent years. The alleviation of human suffering is a moral imperative and UN agencies do possess certain comparative advantages for the implementation and delivery of humanitarian assistance. The use of these agencies should not, however, lead to a diversion of development assistance. This would be short-sighted and self-defeating. The organisations of the UN system themselves have a responsibility to ensure that this does not happen notwithstanding the current competitive aid environment.

Mr. President,

The Commission on Human Rights has, over the years, assumed increased significance as a focal point for addressing human rights issues. Improving the efficiency and methods of work of the Commission has, therefore, engaged the attention of member States in recent times, and will continue. The Secretary-General has on more than one occasion raised the issue of "membership" of the Commission, and the 'responsibilities' and 'privileges' that members of the Commission assume, and the need for a possible 'code of conduct' for members.

We are not persuaded. In our view, such prescriptions strike at the very root of the principle of sovereign equality of member States enshrined in the United Nations. Concern has also been expressed at the politicisation of the Commission on Human Rights. Selective criteria for membership will only serve to accentuate politicisation, not reduce it. And finally, violations and those

responsible for violations of human rights can be addressed by engaging them and bringing them into the fold of the Commission, not by leaving them outside!

We welcome the Secretary General's observation that "poverty and grievance over injustices are only indirectly related to terrorism and cannot excuse it." We also welcome the increase in the practice of Security Council requesting the assessment reports on the humanitarian implications of current and possible future sanction regimes.

We are happy to note that the negotiations between the UN and Cambodia had yielded a fruitful outcome of a Draft Agreement signed at Phnom Penh on 6 June 2003.

We note that the Ad Hoc Committee on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and their Property has succeeded in resolving all of the outstanding issues regarding the draft articles on Jurisdictional Immunities and their Property that the International Law Commission had adopted in 1991. Considering the importance of these draft articles and their ability to contribute to the development of international law, we feel it more appropriate to adopt them as a binding legal instrument. Our concerns on the employment of terrorist methods across boundaries are well known. States which sponsor such international criminal activities are responsible under international law.

Mr. President,

I shall refer now briefly to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation and follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit.

The report of the Secretary General states that the question – whether the world is managing to build the more inclusive and equitable globalization called for in the Millennium Declaration – remains open. It also affirms, correctly, that it would be no exaggeration to state that the success or failure of the Millennium Development Goals hinges on whether developed countries meet their commitments in the areas of trade, debt relief and aid.

The Secretary General has reminded us that achieving the Millennium Development Goals would require a collective response to the challenges faced by the international community in the area of development. The challenge before us is to translate the commitments that have been undertaken into concrete actions so that the internationally agreed development goals are achieved. A sustained and broad based annual per capita income increase of 3% is required to meet the goal of reducing by half, by the year 2015, the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. It has been estimated that an addition of US\$50 billion a year in ODA alone will be needed. Forward movement in the

trade negotiations to address the key concerns of developing countries, in particular increased market access for products of export interest to the developing countries, and operationalizing the special and differential treatment for developing countries are urgently needed steps towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We are disappointed that the Fifth WTO Ministerial Conference at Cancun failed to produce an agreement that would have addressed the interests and concerns of the developing countries.

The Millennium Declaration is based on a vision of global solidarity. MDGs represent a global compact bringing together all member states, developed as well as developing. We note that the Secretariat has adopted a core strategy for supporting achievement of MDGs. One of the three elements of this strategy is the monitoring of progress at the national level. 37 national MDG reports have been prepared and another 60 are to be completed by the end of this year. However, not one of these 97 reports covers a developed country. The question that arises inevitably is why this should be so. We note also that it is the Secretary General's view that developed countries should be encouraged, working through the OECD or other forums, to agree upon time-bound deadlines for the pledges they have made on MDG 8, comparable to the 2015 target for the first seven Millennium Goals. The Millennium Declaration was adopted in a universal setting. If the Declaration and the time-bound commitments for the first seven MDGs were accepted by the United Nations and are subject to monitoring by it, why then should the 8th MDG not also be governed by the same time-bound commitment and subjected to similar monitoring by the UN? The Secretary General clearly states the view that the success or failure of MDGs is dependent on the fulfilment of commitment by developed countries. If the organisation is to meet the test of even-handedness and representativity in its functioning, we would urge that country-level reports be prepared for developed countries as well with regard to progress on the commitments made by them to developing countries for the achievement of MDGs.

These are some questions which arise on one of the main elements of the core strategy of the UN Secretariat. The lack of a satisfactory response to these questions would no doubt detract from the credibility of any monitoring exercise.

Questions also arise on another element of the Secretariat strategy. The Secretary General launched, in October last year, the MDG campaign. This campaign seeks to build coalitions in developing countries which would encourage governments to implement pro-poor policies. Mr. President, I speak for a country, government and people who are united in one single coalition and with one primary mission. That mission is to eradicate poverty and to raise the standard of living of our people. For the democratically elected Government of India, there can be no higher aim, no nobler objective than the eradication of

poverty. So, what is the coalition that the Secretariat would build? And what is the advocacy that they would engage in? Does the Secretariat wish to assume the role of score-keeper or conscience keeper? These, however, are not roles that member States have assigned to them. Nor has the Charter done so. As to seeking a wider advocacy role within the broader elements of civil society, it must be understood that these are, at best self-assumed roles that the UN bureaucracy may seek to influence without getting out of touch with its main constituency within member states.

Mr President,

During the current session we shall follow actively the reform of the planning and budgetary process. We are conscious of the importance of reform, not only in imparting efficiency and substance to the process itself, but also in improving mechanisms that ensure adequate budgetary provisions to meet the requirements of mandated programmes and activities. Considering its long-term implications for the Organisation, there is need for urgency in addressing this issue but we need also to avoid hasty or half-cooked conclusions.

In the area of on-going reforms, we appreciate the efforts to improve the servicing of the General Assembly, refocusing public information activities and the wide ranging reforms in human resources management that have been put in place. Considerable investment has been made in enhancing the information and communication technology base of the Organisation. While some results are already apparent, we look forward to returns that are commensurate with the volume of such investment.

The importance of the current session also lies in the fact that the General Assembly will be considering the Regular Budget of the Organisation for the coming biennium. We welcome the presentation of the Regular Budget in a results-based budgeting framework. We hope that further development of RBB tools will help the Organisation to better justify the resources needed for its programmes and activities and improve accountability.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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