Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, at the informal meeting of the plenary of the United Nations General Assembly to hear a briefing by the Secretary-General on his recent visit to Chile, at the Trusteeship Council Chamber on March 10, 2010

Mr. President,

The Government and the people of India are deeply saddened by the loss of human life and damage that resulted from the earthquake in Chile on 27 February. As a country familiar with the consequences of natural disasters, we fully understand the trauma and suffering that our Chilean brethren are living through.

Mr. President,

Immediately on hearing the news of the earthquake, the Government of India initiated measures to show our solidarity with the people of Chile. Last week, the Prime Minister conveyed to the Chilean President, Dr. Michelle Bachelet that the Government of India would be making a modest cash contribution of US$ 5 million for relief and rehabilitation work following the earthquake.

My delegation would, therefore, like to join others in conveying our sincere condolences to the family members of those who have lost their lives on account of the earthquake. We also express our sympathy and support for the injured. We have no doubt that the people of Chile have the strength and resilience to overcome this natural disaster.

In conclusion, let me thank the Secretary General for his very comprehensive, timely and useful briefing. We appreciate the leadership he has displayed in coordinating the UN's response to the Chilean earthquake. This is truly commendable.

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