

**STATEMENT BY MR. V.K. NAMBIAR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE ON ITEM
10 – REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON WORK OF THE
ORGANIZATION - ITEM 44: FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOME OF THE
MILLENNIUM SUMMIT AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 7, 2002**

Mr. President,

My delegation wishes to congratulate you on the skilful way in which you have been conducting the work of this session. We thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive overview provided to us of the activities of the Organization over the past year in various areas. The report also highlights many major challenges ahead of us. Since time is limited, I shall refer to only a few.

The Secretary-General has reminded us of the need to renew our faith in UN-centered multilateralism. The terrorist attacks of September 11 last year demonstrated that the phenomenon of terrorism can be tackled only through a multilateral approach. No country is immune to terrorism and no country can tackle it alone. While reminding us of the clear interest and responsibility of all states to uphold international law and maintain international order, the SG in his address also calls upon states to agree to “the exercise of sovereignty together” in order “to gain a hold over problems that defeat each separately”. We take these words as a powerful message pointing to the global challenges facing us today that demand action and solutions which acquire legitimacy when tackled through multilateral cooperative efforts.

Admittedly, the credibility of the world organization rests upon its ability to impart momentum or dynamism to the peace processes in areas of tension or potential conflict around the world. In this the Organization has generally worked with deliberation and discretion. In Afghanistan, the Afghan parties were brought together in Bonn in December 2001 under UN auspices and were able to agree on a political process that has now led to the establishment of a Transitional authority under President Karzai. After years of conflict, there now appears a promising, but tenuous, prospect of peace. In the Middle East, the UN has given cautious support to the actions of the Quartet of which it is a constituent. Implied in this approach is the recognition by the UN of the need for a sophisticated and differentiated approach to the many problems that beset the world today.

In the statement introducing his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General had referred to the situation in South Asia, stating that it remains perilous and the underlying causes must be addressed. In our view, the underlying causes are cross-border terrorism and the unwillingness of concerned establishments in our neighbourhood to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism nurtured over almost two decades. Other underlying

causes include a policy of compulsive hostility, the absence of democratic governance and the unwillingness of a military establishment to subject itself to civilian control. It is only when these underlying causes are addressed that the commonalities between the nation-building interests of the peoples of the subcontinent can be rediscovered and problem areas in the relationship between the countries addressed and resolved. The Secretary General has wisely chosen to exhort both parties in South Asia to resume the bilateral dialogue and to resolve differences through peaceful means. In our view, apart from being the only viable option, the bilateral route is also the route to which both countries remain formally committed.

Efforts to sidetrack this essential premise have been at the root of the so-called nuclear scare in the region a few months ago. We do not deny the severity of the political tensions that were generated in the subcontinent as a result of the mindless acts of terrorism perpetrated against important symbols of Indian democracy and nationhood. The measures adopted by the Government of India were deliberate but restrained as would befit a responsible democracy accountable to its people. As mentioned by the SG himself, the efforts of some "well placed" member states did contribute to a temporary easing of the overall situation based on express commitments to end cross-border infiltrations permanently. But, again, these commitments remain unimplemented or backtracked upon.

Within the UN system, the artificial scare created recently by

declaring a Phase III emergency or security alert covering UN personnel in India was not without its whimsical sidelights. Family members of UN staffers in New York, vacationing in India at official expense, were forced to displace themselves from India, at further official expense, to hotels in Thailand for periods extending for weeks! Whatever the implications this may have had for the expenses borne by the Organization, for India this development provided a telling insight into the political judgment and evaluative capacities of the UN Secretariat at senior levels in the Political and Security Divisions.

Mr. President

India has been consistently and totally committed to the cause of UN peace-keeping. This commitment is unwavering and undiminished and will continue. India has contributed more than 60,000 troops and police personnel to 35 UN PKO's with 109 Indian peacekeepers having made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the UN. We have also pledged a brigade under UN Standby Arrangement System to the UN and 60 officers to the on-call list for a generic mission headquarters. Overall, we have been among the highest troop-contributors, having participated in almost every major peacekeeping operation. We, therefore, speak with considerable knowledge and from a wealth of accumulated experience, with the intent of strengthening UN peacekeeping practice and procedures, and making them more efficient and effective.

We are encouraged by the efforts of the Secretariat to incorporate a

gender perspective into peacekeeping operations pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). We support such efforts and feel that further moves in this direction favouring equal access and field participation of women and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflict will bring about a much-needed balance.

While recognizing the progress made in improvement of the management of peace operations, some problems remain. In para 53 of his report, the Secretary General refers to the shortage of peacekeepers. Brahimi in his report had observed that 70% of troop contributors come from the developing countries. This is untenable and reflects poorly on the commitment of those who have a special responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security. The lack of political will among certain member states detracts from the universal character of UN peacekeeping operations. They also lay themselves open to the charge of double standards, whereby they are prepared to contribute to operations in Europe but are reluctant to do so in Africa. This commitment gap needs to be addressed.

Mr. President,

We welcome the attention paid by the Secretary General to the issue of terrorism in his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Terrorism, as is so rightly stated in the report, threatens sovereignty, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the other principles

enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Given the horrific dimensions it has assumed, it represents a central challenge for the international community today.

Terrorism seeks immunity for itself by invoking arguments about its root causes. These arguments provide it with licence for attempting to disrupt democratic processes and for killing civilians, including women and children. Terrorism also finds sustenance and justification from those who say that while acts of terrorism by groups should be condemned, they should not be outlawed. We have heard arguments to the effect that freedom struggles should not be de-legitimised by efforts to link them to terrorism; we would argue that terrorism should not be sought to be legitimised by pseudo-justifications on the grounds of the so-called freedom struggles within independent nations.

Terrorists are often harbored by States. They are financed, trained, armed and provided sanctuary by them. The first and foremost requirement, if we are to make any progress in the fight against terrorism, would be to focus on groups known to perpetuate terrorism and on States known to sponsor them. We have welcomed the creation of the Counter Terrorism Committee by the Security Council. We look forward to meaningful contribution by the Committee to the fight against terrorism. This would go a long way towards the preservation of international peace and security.

India has been a victim of state-sponsored, cross-border terrorism for almost two decades now, with a toll of tens of thousands. The most recent

terrorist attack at a place of worship in Gujarat left a trail of death and destruction in its wake. The people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir demonstrated their resolve to exercise electoral rights to choose their representatives despite attempts to undermine the same by a campaign of intimidation and terror inspired, instigated and executed from across the border. The people of Jammu and Kashmir, in the tradition of all democratic societies, have defied such provocations and chosen to adhere to the democratic path. This may not be palatable to those who, despite their occasional lapses into democracy, are unaccustomed to the values of tolerance, pluralism and respect for diversity that characterize a truly democratic political culture.

Mr. President

While we have had a number of conferences this year, there is universal agreement that it is time to move to the phase of effective implementation of their outcomes, notwithstanding the fact that these outcomes, perhaps, did not live up to the initial expectations of most of the developing countries, including India, in many cases. The Millennium Declaration had provided us with a compass for future direction of international cooperation. However, judged by the experience of the last two years, we are far away from achieving the targets set out in the Millennium Declaration. Enhanced international cooperation is imperative to enable developing countries to fight extreme poverty which continues to be the biggest challenge confronting most of us. There is no alternative to increased resource flows and greater progress

towards the achievement of the 0.7 percent target for ODA; increased market access for products of export interest to the developing countries; and operationalization of special and differential treatment for developing countries during the Doha round of trade negotiations.

Mr. President,

India, with other developing countries, attaches the highest importance to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Monterrey Conference and the Johannesburg Summit were to have provided the means for achieving these goals. While their outcomes were encouraging in many ways, they have fallen short of the level of commitment required from the international community. There is, nevertheless, a need to move ahead and translate the commitments that we have undertaken into concrete action. We are acutely aware that we have only 12 years to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

We welcome the selection by the Secretary General of the theme relating to the treatment and prevention of major diseases, including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The report provides a broad overview with regard to HIV/AIDS. It could, we feel, have been more comprehensive with regard to malaria and tuberculosis.

We note that increased political commitment has led to vastly greater resources from national budgets for fighting HIV/AIDS. The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has approved US\$616 million in grants

for the three diseases. More, undoubtedly, needs to be done. The WTO Ministerial Declaration of November 2001 which clarified that TRIPS could and should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of the right of member States to protect public health and promote access to medicines is a significant step in the right direction.

Mr. President,

We find that the section of the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration dealing with human rights, democracy and good governance focuses, nearly exclusively, on international conventions, legal frameworks and world conferences. This is disappointing as selective solutions which rely exclusively on strengthening the legal order for the promotion of human rights or enforcement-minded approaches for redressal of human rights grievances, by themselves, contribute little to any durable culture of human rights. We are also surprised that there is, in this section of the report, no reference to usurpation of power by the military and its perpetuation through legal framework orders. It would, in our view, have a bearing on the subject of democracy, good governance and human rights.

Mr. President,

We welcome the Global MDG Campaign initiated by the Secretary General and the appointment of Ms. Eveline Herfkens as its Executive Coordinator. The Zedillo High Level Panel has estimated that an additional US\$ 50 billion in ODA alone is required if the MDGs are to be met. The MDGs

were not adopted in a meeting of the G-77. They were adopted by a Summit held in the United Nations and are contained in the Millennium Declaration, which represents a global compact bringing together all member States, developed and developing. We would, in this context, urge country level reporting - on ODA, debt relief and market access - for our developed partners as well. Such reports should help to foster and focus public debate in developed countries, re-energise a broad political constituency in favour of development, and create the necessary links between national priorities and targets assumed at the global level. It is only by having country level reporting on the fulfilment of pledges undertaken by developed countries that the Secretary General's campaign can be truly global.

Mr. President,

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the continuous efforts of the UN system to respond to humanitarian crises. In Afghanistan, in particular, the UN system has demonstrated its ability to quickly and effectively face up to the most daunting of challenges. The UNDP is playing a leading role in meeting humanitarian, recovery and rehabilitation requirements. UNICEF has supported the back-to-school campaign which has ensured that 3 million children have returned to school. The WFP has launched one of its largest relief programmes in Afghanistan, providing the difference between starvation and survival. We commend the UN system for these achievements. We hasten, however, to strike a note of caution. The Secretary General has often reminded us of what happens

when a crisis stops attracting media attention. We must not allow that to happen in Afghanistan as that would have a bearing on the credibility the UN system enjoys in the field of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President,

We are happy to note the support provided by the UN system for the development of Africa. The findings of the independent review commissioned by the Secretary General on the UN New Agenda for the Development of

Africa will be a useful guide when we consider the support which the international community should provide to the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We are happy that FAO has already initiated a joint programme with NEPAD. The UN system should work closely with African governments and its support to NEPAD should be African driven. Any deviation would only be seen as an attempt to impose an external agenda. This, we hope, will not happen.