

Statement by Amb. M.S. Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN at the Security Council Open Debate on “Maintenance of international peace and security: conflict prevention and natural resources” in New York on June 19, 2013

Thank you, Mr. President.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening today’s open debate on this important issue of “Conflict Prevention and Natural Resources”. I would also like to thank your delegation for preparing a concept paper on the topic under discussion. I also take this opportunity to thank Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his statement earlier in the day.

Mr. President,

The intrinsic link between effective management of natural resources and development is a time tested reality. Conflict, indeed, holds back development. It is a fact that in several countries on the agenda of the Security Council, including those in Africa, control over natural resources and their exploitation are serious exacerbating factors fanning conflict and also remain major impediment to post-conflict nation building.

If one peeps into history of these conflicts, both control and exploitation of natural resources have been driven largely by factors outside the control of the affected countries. Outside interference for control and exploitation of natural resources when combined with political objectives and ethnic rivalries has been a particularly combusive mix for conflicts. This has caused several countries in Africa to remain mired in conflicts for decades. It is therefore necessary to tackle the issue holistically.

Mr. President,

It is imperative that we fully respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all UN member-states, including when this Council considers situations on its agenda. The international community, including this Council, must respect the states’ right to control and manage their affairs, including natural resources. There must be no attempt to be prescriptive about control, management and use of natural resources by the states concerned.

Even while some countries in Africa are in conflict related to natural resources, we must note that the continent has been the second fastest growing region in the world in the past decade. During the first decade of the current millennium, six of the 10 fastest growing economies were from Africa. The collective African GDP is expected to grow to US \$ 2.6 trillion by 2025. Clearly, with the increased assistance of the

international community, conflict affected countries in Africa can achieve faster progress.

In this regard, it is important for the international community, particularly the United Nations, to play a seminal role in capacity building of the concerned member-states. Conflict-affected countries do need assistance to fulfill their international commitments and strengthen their internal institutions, including those dealing with security and border control.

The role of the international community, including the relevant UN agencies, should be to enhance development partnership with the countries in conflict situation. This should include higher allocations of financial, technical and human resources by donors and UN agencies and must be aligned with national priorities of the countries concerned.

Mr. President,

We commend the efforts and commitment of the relevant UN agencies in developing capacities of countries in conflict and post conflict situations. We hope that their commitment to capacity building of States, including in control and management of natural resources, will be matched by adequate resources and support will be provided based on request of national government and on mutual agreement.

Before I end, Mr. President, let me state that there has been a concerted push to bring several normative issues into the Council's agenda under the pretext of their affecting international peace and security. This needs to be avoided for the effective functioning of the UN system. The Charter provides clear division of responsibilities between the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, and other specialized bodies created by the member-states. All UN bodies, including this Council, must respect this division of roles and responsibilities.

Thank you.

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