

**NAM Ministerial Meeting, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt
(May 9-10, 2012)**

**Statement by
Shri E. Ahamed, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for your Chairmanship of this Ministerial Meeting and the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to us.

I would also like to express our deep appreciation for the exemplary manner in which Egypt has guided the Non-Aligned Movement.



Mr. Chairman,

In today's increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependent world, the challenges confronting us are much more complex, multidimensional and transnational in nature.

In facing these challenges, the unity of the Movement is of paramount importance.

Mr. Chairman,

Winds of change are sweeping across West Asia and North Africa today. People are demanding a greater role for themselves in shaping their destiny, politically and economically.

These aspirations need to be channelized into an inclusive and participatory polity while maintaining social stability and cohesion.

This process should take into consideration each society's particular circumstances and the genius of its people and not to cede any space to extremism.

Insofar as the international community is concerned, diplomatic efforts rather than military means should be pursued. Although they require patience and persistence, they provide more durable solutions.

It is also important to respect the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Member States.

As the world's largest democracy and a fellow developing country, India stands ready to share its institution-building experience.

Mr. Chairman,

While talking about the changes taking place in West Asia and North Africa, we must not forget the long-standing issue of Palestine.

India supports the Palestinian people's struggle for a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital living within secure and recognized borders, side by side and at peace with Israel, as endorsed in the Arab Peace initiative, the Quartet Roadmap and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

We have also been at the forefront of supporting Palestine's statehood and membership of the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

Some of the major challenges confronting the world today relate to the world economy and its impact on development.

It is imperative that we make all efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and eradicate poverty.

Stability in food and energy prices also needs to be a critical endeavour.

We must bring about a qualitative enhancement in the health and education situation of our people.

Sustainable development and inclusive growth need to be integral to our efforts.

The development imperatives of developing countries and social cohesion and environmental protection must be ensured in the outcome of the Rio +20 Conference.

Climate change must be addressed based on the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibility.

Mr. Chairman,

We need to reinvigorate our efforts towards more democratic, equitable, and legitimized platforms of global governance that reflect contemporary realities.

The world's international institutions, in particular, the UN and its Security Council require fundamental changes.

Genuine reform is essential, in particular of the Security Council and it must encompass expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership and an improvement of its working methods.

Mr. Chairman,

Our African brethren constitute the largest single grouping in our Movement. The Movement must continue to work towards ensuring Africa's pre-eminence in the global development agenda.

We are happy that at this meeting we will be adopting a declaration to commemorate the centenary of the African National Conference.

We must ensure that the needs of the Least Developed Countries are given high priority.

The special requirements of the Small Island Developing States must also be addressed.

India is strongly committed to South-South Cooperation with fellow developing countries world-wide. Partnership with Africa is a cornerstone of our development partnership efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

Terrorism is one of the greatest scourges of our times. It cannot be condoned or justified on any ground whatsoever.

The fight against terrorism must be unrelenting and directed not only against the terrorists, but also against those who sponsor, abet or support them.

We need to enhance international cooperation against terrorism and plug the gaps in the legal framework, including through the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament which is also enshrined in the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of 1988.

The Movement should continue to support international efforts for achieving universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and a world free of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework.

NAM should support the UN disarmament machinery as stated in the First special session of the General Assembly on Disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

We must build on areas of commonality, guided by a forward looking and focussed agenda for our Movement, which draws inspiration from our convictions of the past and our aspirations for the future.

Diversity is our strength. As we confront the challenges of today, it is imperative that we act in unity and solidarity.

I am confident that our comprehensive deliberations during this Meeting would be very useful for the forthcoming NAM Summit in Iran in August, 2012.

Thank you.

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