

**STATEMENT BY H E AMBASSADOR BHAGWANT SINGH BISHNOI,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE JOINT DEBATE ON
AGENDA ITEMS 121: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE
UNITED NATIONS & AGENDA ITEM 122: REVITALIZATION OF THE
WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE 68TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON DECEMBER 4, 2013**

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this important discussion.

I am happy to place on record our appreciation for the good work done by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group for last year, Ambassador Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil, Permanent Representative of Egypt.

I also welcome the appointments of the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Thailand as co-Chairs of the ad-hoc Working Group for this Session.

I would also like to align myself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of Non-Aligned Group.

Mr. President,

The impact of the political transformations sweeping parts of the world and the continuing weakness in the global economy has exposed the weakness of globalization. The increasingly complex and pressing transnational challenges of our time, namely the issues of peace and security, development, human rights, the environment and health, among others, also require more effective structures of global governance and a revitalized General Assembly.

Mr. President,

In your acceptance speech in July 2013, you had rightly identified reinvigoration of the reform agenda of the General Assembly as critical. In your inaugural address to the 68th General Assembly you had reiterated your determination to dedicate significant time and resources to the issues of reforming and revitalizing the major bodies of UN: the Assembly and the Council. You can count on India's support in these endeavors of yours.

The need for revitalization of the General Assembly has long been recognized by this Assembly. However, after more than two decades of discussions, there are few changes even in its working methods and negligible outcome in terms of substantively changing the norms and structures of the Assembly.

Mr. President,

Without prejudging the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group that should start soon, I would like to place on record the Indian delegation's considered views on some of the more important aspects of the issue which concern General Assembly Revitalization.

We have consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected both in letter and spirit. The Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues. In particular, revitalization must restore the primacy of the UN in development matters.

We need to change it from being a talk shop to a place where transnational issues that impact each and every one of us are addressed swiftly and truly global solutions prescribed.

Mr. President,

First of all, it is critical that we establish a relationship of respect for respective mandates between the General Assembly and the Security Council in the spirit of the Charter. The Council should not encroach upon the mandate of the Assembly through extremely wide and permissive interpretations of what constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

Second, the Assembly we believe must have a greater say in the process of selection of the Secretary General. The continued circumscribing of the Assembly's role and responsibilities in the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary General needs to change in the interests of the United Nations system in general and the Assembly's prerogatives in particular.

And, thirdly, the Assembly and the other entities that form part of the UN system must reflect best practices in its day to day functioning. And it has a lot to learn from member-states in this regard.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me re-emphasize the need to discuss substantive measures that would strengthen the role of General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative body of the international community.

You can count on India's constructive support and participation in these efforts. Thank you.

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