

Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative, on Agenda Item 110 Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization at the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on October 14, 2015

Mr. President,

We thank the distinguished Secretary General for his annual report A/70/1 on the Work of the Organization. We are fortunate that our meeting today takes place soon after our leaders have addressed the High Level Segment of the General Assembly. We therefore have not only the perspective given in the Secretary General's Report, but also the views of our leaders, to help us in our meeting today.

Mr. President,

2. Before we go into some aspects of the Secretary General's Report, it would be worth noting that para 4 of this Report itemizes as many as 13 specific areas of conflicts or crises which currently scar the landscape of international peace and security and the emergence of new threats from terrorist groups to international peace and security. The cumulative impact of these conflicts or crises is being felt by almost 60 million people, innocent men, women and children. Yet, Section-B of the Report is strangely silent on why the UN Security Council, which is serviced by the Secretariat of the Organization, and which has the primary responsibility under the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, has allowed such a mushrooming of crises to occur.

3. My delegation, at the highest level, has repeatedly stated that the ineffectiveness of the Security Council is due to the unrepresentative composition of its permanent members 70 years after 1945. We are all party to the unanimous decision of our leaders in the 2005 World Summit for early reforms of the Security Council to make it fit for purpose for the 21st century. Para 102 of the Report tries to reflect the significant progress made by us in this Assembly on 14 September 2015, but buries this in the statistics of "business as usual".

4. The context for our deep concern at the steady erosion of international peace and security is the recent adoption by our leaders of the ambitious Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. The Report gives many details about the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and their integration into the Sustainable Development Goals which are at the heart of Agenda 2030. We have expressed our support for the vision of the distinguished Secretary General in these areas of the Report before us today, including in the area of Climate Change. In many of the SDGs we have adopted, India has announced national developmental initiatives, with specific time frames for implementation. We would like our national effort, encompassing almost one-sixth of humanity, to accelerate and lead the way for the achievement of Agenda 2030 in a substantive manner. However, we are also cognizant of the importance of the interlinkage, and impact, of a supportive and stable political environment for the successful implementation of Agenda 2030. It is self-evident that political instability deters the flow of investments, technology and trade, and consequently severely restrict

prospects for sustained socio-economic growth. In a globalized world, our overarching objective of eradicating poverty by 2030 from our planet will be jeopardized unless we adopt a holistic approach.

Mr. President,

5. We would like to touch on three issues covered by the Report. The first is on UN peace operations. The Report provides a detailed account of the attempts being made by the UN Security Council to draw up mandates for both peace keeping and peace building operations. The two have been synergized in the public mind through the Secretary General's appointment of a High Level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO). We have endorsed the recommendations of this Panel in the General Assembly, and look forward to contributing to implementing these during this Session, especially in the C34 Committee on Peacekeeping. India has committed significant additional resources, including an increase of 10% in our existing contribution of over 8000 troops, provision of additional female peacekeepers, highly skilled enablers and facilities for training the peacekeepers of other member states in order to implement the Panel's recommendations.

6. The second issue is terrorism. This is an issue on which the United Nations has appeared ineffective, though both the Security Council and General Assembly have adopted either resolutions and sanctions regimes or strategies to counter terrorism over the past 15 years. As far as the Organization is concerned, we note that as many as 31 entities within the United Nations deal with some aspect of countering terrorism. The need for us to agree on a coordinator for the work of these entities is a priority which we cannot postpone. Our public consciousness is being ravaged daily by incessant acts of terrorism targeting innocent people, our civilizational heritage, and, increasingly, the socio-economic infrastructure of our societies, especially in vulnerable developing countries. We look forward to the Secretary General's initiative on countering terrorism mentioned in para 96 during this Session of our Assembly. We hope that his initiative will include a roadmap to assist us adopt the long-pending Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, at the heart of which is the legal principle of "prosecute or extradite".

Mr. President,

7. The third issue, we would like to comment on is reflected in Section C of the Report on Africa. India is organizing the third India-Africa Forum Summit during 26-29 October, 2015, at which we have planned the participation of all 54 African countries. This will be the single biggest diplomatic event held in India since 1983. We aim to build on our traditional bonds of political and socio-economic relations with Africa, and take advantage of the new technologies which will enable us to accelerate our common developmental aspirations. The success of the pan-Africa E-network project, with a focus on telemedicine and tele-education, is a good example of how we can contribute as a responsible member state to the commitment of our Organization for rapid development of Africa.

Mr. President,

8. India has steadily increased its active participation in the humanitarian works in order to become a reliable early responder to humanitarian crises. During the past year, in response to the Secretary General's appeal, we were the biggest developing country financial contributor to the Ebola Trust Fund. Similarly, at the International Donors Conference in Kathmandu, we made significant contributions to the early relief and rehabilitation of the thousands of victims of the devastating earthquake in Nepal. WE have contributed quickly to devastation caused by cyclones and storms both in the Pacific as well as in the Caribbean. Through our participation in South-South Cooperation structures such as the India Brazil South Africa Fund, we have shared our developmental experience with our partners in the developing world, without making this partnership conditional or prescriptive.

In conclusion, Mr. President, it is most unfortunate that the distinguished delegate of Pakistan has chosen to refer to issues that are extraneous to the debate that we are having today. We have diplomatic relations with Pakistan and such issues should be addressed in the framework of these relations, instead of being aired elsewhere.

I thank you, Mr. President.