

**Permanent Mission of India
New York**

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**UN Security Council Open Debate on ‘Upholding the Purposes and Principles of the UN
Charter and Strengthening the UN-centered International System’**

**Statement by Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, Permanent Representative
26 May 2026**

Mr. President,

At the outset, I thank you for convening today’s Open Debate. I also thank the UNSG for his briefing and his insightful remarks.

2. Today’s theme gains particular salience in the wake of ongoing geo-political developments, marked by fragmentation and fault lines that have considerably strained multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. Concerns related to legitimacy, efficacy and relevance of the UN are growing, particularly the role of the Security Council in delivering on its mandate of maintenance of international peace and security.

3. Please allow me to start with the history of the UN. Foundations of this organization were built on the ravages of the Second World War. The devastating impact of this War was strongly felt by my country, India. Over two and a half million Indian soldiers fought alongside the Allied Powers and over 87,000 Indian soldiers made the supreme sacrifice. This was not our war, but we paid dearly for it. Therefore, it was natural for us to become a founding member of the UN. It was reflective of our yearning for peace. Though the UN was established, it did not put an end to colonialism. The global politics of colonialism that prevailed during the time ensured that India was not duly recognized for the significant sacrifices we made.

4. The dilution of and lack of respect for the purposes and principles of the UN Charter is not a new phenomenon. It took a few decades for countries of Africa and Asia to break free from the shackles of colonialism. However, India never compromised on its unwavering faith in the UN and in multilateralism. During the Cold War, India made tremendous foundational contributions towards establishing UN peacekeeping and in the maintenance of international peace and security, including in Korea, Indochina, Congo and Gaza. India continues to be guided by this approach.

Mr. President,

5. Though the UN Charter mandated a review Conference in 1955, such a review has not been done. The only amendments done to the Charter in the 1960s and 70s increased the elected members of the Council from 6 to 10 and membership of ECOSOC from 18 to 54. The fundamental decision-making dynamic of the permanent members of the Council continues to remain unchanged over the last eight decades.

6. The footprint of the Council saw a significant expansion in the post-Cold War period. There was concomitant budgetary growth for peacekeeping operations and other initiatives related to peace and security. That global landscape, and those circumstances, of the 1990s have changed considerably since then. The period of heightened activism of the Council has now faded and the world is now characterized by fragmentation and confrontation. We have a divided Council at the level of permanent veto-wielding members. The calls for enhancing efficiencies and productivity at the UN are more pronounced than ever.

7. The central to UN's challenges today is an architecture that is frozen in the 1940's. It is akin to running advanced AI technologies on the 1945 version of the computer called the

Electronic Numerical Integrator. Lack of progress in the Inter Governmental Negotiations on Council reforms is indicative of entrenched interests of several member states to maintain the status quo and retain the eight-decade old UNSC architecture. Yet, we must not forget that if our human race had not been adaptable, humanity itself would not have survived and thrived. The UN cannot be indifferent to this fundamental evolutionary principle. It must be flexible and adaptable to deliver meaningfully on the principles and purposes of the UN Charter.

8. Mr. President, as the concept note outlines, a critical challenge the UN faces today is one of double standards. These are characterized not only by inconsistent application of principles in different situations, but also by inconsistency between words and actions. Brute force and power do not deliver stronger multilateralism or global public good. The spirit of cooperation and ability to make compromises for greater global good must be demonstrated and acted upon.

9. India would like to underscore the following specific points to reinforce a UN-centered international system:

First, the General Assembly is a truly democratic organ of the UN. It does not offer disproportionate benefits or privileges to any member state. This principal organ must be strengthened.

Second, the UN Security Council architecture that is frozen in time must make way for purposeful reform reflecting contemporary geo-political realities. Sacrifices made in the Second World War alone cannot justify an archaic and antiquated design for perpetuity. We can't shield the permanent category of membership from any review or reform forever while calling for enhanced representation of developing countries, and under and unrepresented geographies only in the elected category of membership. We must address and expand the permanent category of membership which alone will change the decision making process of

this Council. Not adapting to changed circumstances would further diminish the authority, credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness of the UN Security Council.

Third, the UNSC must be more transparent. The wider UN membership is an important stakeholder on all Security Council matters. Denying access to historical and contemporary documents and maintaining the rules of procedure at a provisional status are not tenable in this age. The working methods must be refashioned appropriately in tune with our times. The UN Security Council must be a living instrument, not a fossil.

More than any other member state, the permanent members must deliberate on this matter.

10. Mr. President, I am compelled to respond to baseless and unwarranted remarks made by Pakistan today. India would like to set the facts straight. Independent India began its life battling with cross-border aggression by Pakistan, which coveted Indian territories that had become a part of India as a result of their complete, legal and irrevocable accession.

11. Pakistan, by waging several wars and inflicting unprovoked aggression against India and through its continued sponsorship of cross-border terrorism, has violated the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity and peaceful coexistence.

12. The use of cross-border terrorism by Pakistan and its doctrine of “bleeding India by a thousand cuts” exposes its hollow rhetoric of commitment to the UN Charter. India has every right to defend itself from such cross-border terrorism. Pakistan will have to accept that there are consequences to its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. Pakistan’s harnessing of the malevolent forces of terrorism, religious extremism, violent radicalism, and anti-India rhetoric has continued unabated since its creation. The facts in this regard are on public record and need

no further elucidation. Pakistan must credibly and irrevocably end its support for all forms of terrorism.

13. We continue to demonstrate our commitment to the purposes and principles enunciated in the UN Charter.

14. In conclusion, India would like to reiterate that reforming the UN, particularly the Security Council, is critical to its continued relevance and legitimacy.

I thank you, Mr. President.
