



**STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, ON
THE ROLE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES AT THE
SECURITY COUNCIL ON JULY 12, 2005.**

Mr. President,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of July 2005. The agenda of the Council for the month is indicative of the important issues that the Council is called upon to deal with. I have no doubt that these issues will receive the most careful consideration under your stellar leadership.

Mr. President,

As we are taking the floor for the first time this month, I would like to convey, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government and people of India, our deep condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of the United Kingdom for the tragedy that has resulted from the terrorist attacks in London. This reprehensible act is a crime not just against the United Kingdom, but against all humanity. The horror perpetrated in London will remain etched on the collective consciousness of the world as a signal that terrorism has become one of the greatest threats of our times. It is not constrained by distance and resources, nor restricted by boundaries or bound by any civilised norms in wreaking devastation. The world community must rise as one to respond decisively to this collective challenge to the peace, security and progress of the entire mankind.

Mr. President,

I wish to thank you for scheduling this open meeting of the Security Council today. Regular participation of the general membership in Council debates on important issues under its consideration is a step towards the desired goal of achieving greater transparency and inclusiveness in the work of the Council.

The theme of the debate today is one that has been discussed on a number of occasions by the Council under different nomenclatures. My delegation has participated in several open debates on related issues and our position on these is well-known. In recent months, the consideration of this and related issues under the rubric of reform of the United Nations, based particularly on report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the Secretary General's "In larger freedom" report, has enabled a fresh airing of views on the subject.

We believe that the topic of this debate belongs more to the General Assembly as it revolves around more than one issue such as implementation of humanitarian law, rule of

law in conflict situations and capacity building of States in conflict, or those emerging from conflict. But you have redressed the balance through the idealism and reason you have brought to bear on the debate, characteristic of Hellenic civilisations and your method of conducting the discussions which would remain a model for the future. If I am permitted a Christian metaphor, we hope this would be the "rock" on which the future working practices of the Security Council will be built. [The Greek Foreign Minister is Petros G. Molyviatis – Petros means rock in Greek].

India has on several occasions expressed its reservation on intrusive monitoring and finger pointing while dealing with specific human rights situation in individual countries. This principle applies equally in cases of violation of humanitarian laws. We remain convinced in the essential validity of an approach that is based on dialogue, consultation and cooperation leading to genuine improvements in the situation where violations of human rights law and humanitarian law are addressed without any external interference.

We have on earlier occasions also made it clear that any discussion which is used as a cover for conferring legitimacy on the so-called "right of humanitarian intervention" or making it the ideology of some kind of "military humanism" is unacceptable. We believe that in case of humanitarian crises manifested in the form of genocide and gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law, no amount of sophistry can substitute for the lack of political will among major powers.

There is, in fact, a very troubling pattern usually ignored or not acknowledged. In several countries, because of the suspicion now engendered that humanitarian assistance is driven by political motives, and that those who take humanitarian action also take sides, parties to a conflict have either targeted humanitarian workers or those they work for, or refused them access. These fears can only be allayed if humanitarian assistance returns to its roots, and humanitarian action is seen as apolitical, neutral, and offered at request, in accordance with the guiding principles so clearly enunciated by the General Assembly in its Resolution 46/182.

We are not certain if an investigation of the reasons behind countries relapsing into conflict would serve much useful purpose. There may be a variety of reasons that drag countries into a state of armed conflict. It is well-known that transitional situations are complex and country-specific. However, the single-most effective instrument for assisting countries from relapsing into conflict, to our mind, would be development. It is widely acknowledged that development assistance to post-conflict countries can help in stabilizing the situation and provide the time needed for building national institutions.

Mr. President,

The General Assembly resolution on "Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for development of the UN System" (59/250) urged the UN agencies and donor community, in coordination with the national authorities, to begin planning the transition to development and taking measures supportive of that transition, such as institutional and capacity-building, from the beginning of the relief phase.

The resolution has stressed the need for transitional activities to be undertaken under national ownership through the development of national capacities at all levels to manage the transition process. We feel that the UN system as a whole must look at the issues of national capacity development as a priority in post-conflict situations. The effort should be to develop national capacity and promote national ownership.

Post-conflict countries would also benefit from sharing experience and expertise from other developing countries. South-South Cooperation modalities, including triangular cooperation modalities should form an important component of the development of post-conflict countries. The use of information technologies and knowledge management systems, as well as exchange of expertise should be facilitated to enable post-conflict countries to take advantage of the experience of other developing countries.

Mr. President,

There is a general understanding among the membership today that in the event of gross and egregious violations of human rights or genocide, the international community can no longer remain silent. A humanitarian crisis can also be the result of famines, droughts, natural calamities, infectious diseases and a host of other factors. The Council has the authority under Chapter VII provisions to intervene where it deems necessary. Yet there continue to be doubts about the political objectivity of decisions that empower States to act against others in the light of humanitarian crises.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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