



STATEMENT BY MR. ARUNA KUMAR VUNDAVALLI, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 68: ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND AGENDA ITEM 71: RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 08, 2007

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on Agenda items 68 and 71 on 'Elimination of racism and racial discrimination' and 'Right of peoples to self-determination' respectively. We thank Mr. Doudou Diene, Special Rapporteur on Contemporary forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination and related Intolerance, and Mr. José Gomez del Prado, Chairperson of the Working Group, on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self determination, for their statements in the Committee.

The Special Rapporteur has drawn the attention of Member States to the alarming signs of a retreat in the struggle against racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. In this context, he specifically referred to two serious developments namely the growing acceptance of the usage of racism and xenophobia due to racist and xenophobic platforms of political parties and a rise in racist political violence. He drew attention to the emergence of immigration and asylum issues as the major sources for resurgence of racism and xenophobia. He also referred to the serious nature of defamation of religions and recommended that the United Nations should strengthen the role of inter-religious, inter-cultural and intra-religious dialogue to address the problem.

We support the Secretary-General's call for a multi-faceted approach to combat racism, including through adoption of relevant legislation and amending existing laws combined with action at the national level based on strategies elaborated through national action plans. In addition, effective implementation of the commitments made in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of key importance to foster social harmony. We look forward to a constructive dialogue during the two scheduled substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee in 2008 to finalize the arrangements for the Durban Review Conference to be held in 2009.

Mr. Chairman,

India has maintained unwavering support and solidarity for the people of Palestine to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to self-

determination. Palestine remains the unfinished task in the realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination. It is in this context that India has consistently urged the resumption of a direct, face to face dialogue of principals, based on the Quartet Principles. We also remain convinced that the Roadmap, as endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 1515, remains a valid framework of reference for an eventual settlement, even though its originally-envisioned target date for a settlement has already passed.

We are with the overwhelming majority of countries who consistently affirm their commitment to a negotiated two-State solution, accepted by the two principals, that would result in a viable, contiguous, sovereign and independent State of Palestine, existing side-by-side with Israel in peace and security. We support the call of the UN Secretary-General to consider innovative ways by all sides in order to fully implement the Roadmap and thus lead, without delay, to a just, fair, equitable and mutually-acceptable solution to this conflict, based on relevant UN resolutions, including Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

Attempts continue to be made at the United Nations and elsewhere to reinvent some of the basic principles of the Charter, such as self-determination, and to apply them selectively for narrow political ends. We believe that it is necessary to once again place the concept of right of peoples to self-determination in historical perspective. Relevant international principles re-affirm India's consistent view that self-determination is a right applicable to the peoples of non-self governing colonies and trust territories. Once exercised, this right enables a whole people to freely choose their own form of Government and for all segments of society to collectively participate in national decision making through representative, democratic institutions. The international community has consistently affirmed that the right of self-determination does not extend to component parts or groups within independent sovereign states and any attempts aimed at the partial or total disruption of their national unity are incompatible with the purpose and principles of the UN Charter.

The right to self-determination cannot become an instrument to promote subversion and erode the political cohesion or territorial integrity of sovereign member states of the UN. It cannot be abused to encourage secession and undermine pluralistic and democratic states. Moreover, there is no room for self-determination to be distorted and misinterpreted as a right of a group, on the basis of ethnicity, religion or racial criteria, or any other such categorization, and use it to attempt to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a state.

Mr. Chairman,

In this context, we regret the unacceptable references to the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir made by the delegation of Pakistan. It would suffice to say that the Indian State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Union of India. Its people have exercised their right of self determination at the time of India's independence and have, since then, repeatedly and regularly participated in free, fair and open elections at all levels. In contrast, Pakistan pretends to be a protector of human rights while denying even a semblance of such rights to the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and to the people of Pakistan itself. Pakistani authorities

would also do well to listen to their own people, including the judiciary, who are demanding human rights and the rule of law.

By its references Pakistan is trying to divide the ranks of those who support the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination. It will never succeed in its efforts.

We do not consider the sentiments expressed by the delegation of Pakistan as being helpful as these have the potential of vitiating an atmosphere that has been painstakingly created as a result of the Composite Dialogue between us so far.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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