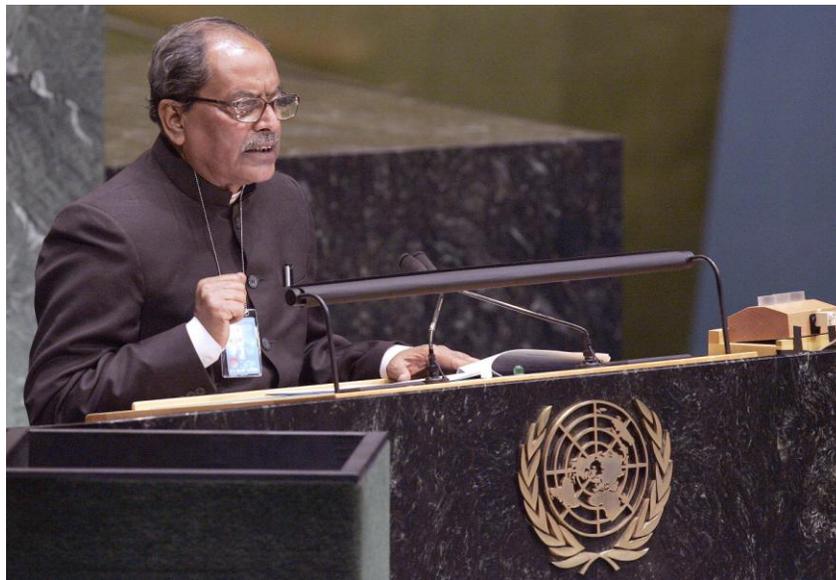




STATEMENT BY MR. TARIT BARAN TOPDAR, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEMS 107 – FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOME OF THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT; 44 – INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE AND SUMMITS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS, AND 112 – STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AT THE 63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 17, 2008



Mr. President,

We welcome the opportunity to participate in this joint debate on the various agenda items relating to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. We thank the Secretariat for the report on these issues.

Mr. President,

United Nations conferences and summits held since the 1990s have generated an unprecedented global consensus on a shared vision of development. However, what is of concern is the lack of a similar consensus in the matter of implementation of this vision. Implementation remains hampered, firstly by a continuing lack of adequate resources and, further by absence of an enabling international environment. I do not need to repeat facts, like the continuing fall in Official Development Assistance flows or the net outflow of resources from developing to developed countries, to highlight the former. The current ongoing financial crisis, which did not originate in developing countries but is impairing their development efforts, is just one example of the latter.

The 2005 World Summit embraced a broader concept of internationally agreed development goals, not just limited to the Millennium Development Goals. These can only be reached through the implementation of the broader set of commitments undertaken at the major United Nations conferences and summits. Further, the different goals and targets adopted at these conferences and summits can be achieved only if they are pursued together, in an integrated manner.

In this regard, we have been repeatedly emphasizing the importance of development-oriented international economic, financial and trade policies to assist developing countries in their development initiatives. Globalization, with its enhancement of flow of capital and goods without sufficient attention to its adverse impacts, has made the need for such pro-development policies imperative and most urgent. This has been amply demonstrated by the current financial crisis, coupled with the food crisis and a higher risk to energy security.

Mr. President,

To ensure that international policies are pro-development, concerns of developing countries in the formulation and implementation of these policies must be effectively taken on board. Unfortunately, current institutional structures do not permit this, even though developing countries are the most affected ones. We are heartened by the near global consensus on the need for an urgent and fundamental reform of the international financial and economic architecture. Such reform must enhance the voice and participation of developing countries in the decision-making and norm-setting processes. In order to make this process as inclusive as possible, the United Nations, with its unique position and legitimacy, could play a key role.

Trade must assist countries in their development efforts. An early development-oriented outcome of the Doha Development Round of trade negotiations, which does not sacrifice the livelihood concerns of millions of poor and marginal farmers, is of paramount importance. We also need to accelerate the implementation of the development mandate of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. We must ensure that rewards for innovators must be balanced with

benefits for humankind, particularly in issues like public health, benefit sharing of use of genetic resources, and affordable environment-friendly technologies that are crucial for addressing climate change and related aspects.

Mr. President,

The Economic and Social Council has a crucial role in fostering a comprehensive development agenda of the United Nations through an integrated and coordinated implementation of the commitments. The Council has an acknowledged role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development. The strengthening of the Economic and Social Council in 2006, and the incorporation of new elements in its functioning, were useful steps in this regard. We particularly highlight the importance of the new mandate given to the Council in 2006 for undertaking a regular and periodic review and assessment of international economic and development policies and their impact on development. We must enhance the capacities of the Economic and Social Council in order to effectively implement this mandate, including periodic reviews based on a development perspective, of the policies of international financial institutions.

It is satisfying that the Annual Ministerial Review of the Economic and Social Council has become an important event to review efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and learn from sharing of experiences. This event must have an added focus on evaluating the implementation of the “global partnership for development”. The Development Cooperation Forum, which held its first session earlier this year, must consolidate its unique role in overseeing trends in international development cooperation. The Council should also continue to discuss topical and emerging issues, and provide policy inputs and guidance. Only through such an integrated approach can the development agenda be maintained at the core of the efforts of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Strengthening the United Nations system without a comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council is inconceivable. The reform of the Security Council must include an expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories and improvement in its working methods. Let us recall that at the 2005 World Summit, we had pledged for early reform of the Security Council, identifying it as an essential element of our overall efforts to reform the United Nations. The continued delay in reforming the Security Council illustrates the fundamental deficiency in implementing decisions adopted.

Consultations in the Open-Ended Working Group have outlived their utility. We are happy that there was unanimous recognition of this, and Decision 62/557 adopted on September 15, 2008 agreed to commence intergovernmental negotiations in an informal plenary of the General Assembly, based on proposals of Member States, within

a defined timeframe. We fully support the decision of the President of the General Assembly to commence these negotiations on November 21, 2008. This is entirely in line with Decision 62/557, and we look forward to the negotiating process producing concrete results.

The United Nations system also cannot be strengthened without revitalizing the General Assembly. This must be not simply a technical process concerned with agenda and the technical means employed but a political process where the General Assembly takes important political decisions on comprehensively reforming the Security Council, on issues of peace under certain circumstances, on having an actual say in the election of the Secretary-General etc. An important part of such a reform would be increasing the accountability of the Secretariat to the Member States and an increase in the efficiency of the Secretariat.

Before concluding, Mr. President, let me highlight that we are now in the process of negotiating the outcome document of the Doha Conference on Financing for Development. It is important that we do not perpetuate an endless cycle of commitments without implementation, and the Doha outcome document appropriately focuses on means of implementation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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