



STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
AT THE AD-HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE REVITALIZATION OF THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY ON FEBRUARY 26, 2010

Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate the two Co-Chairs Ambassador Sanja Štiglic of Slovenia and Ambassador Jorge Argüello of Argentina on their nomination as co-facilitators for the Ad-hoc Working Group on 'Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly'. Our sincere appreciation also goes to the previous Co-Chairs from Norway and Ecuador for their significant efforts to guide the Working Group during the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly.

I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki for his leadership and commitment to carry forward this process. For the first time in the past several years, we have a President who has been closely associated with the UN system. I am confident that under his guidance, we will be able to achieve substantive progress this year on the revitalization of the General Assembly.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the commitment of my delegation to remain actively engaged in this most important of processes for UN reform.

Mr. President,

The world today is obviously not the one of 1945. The need for change is, therefore, obvious given the vastly changed contemporary realities. It is my considered belief that among the UN Member States there is now an unprecedented desire to usher in substantive reforms. There is a palpable sense that we are at the cusp of a possible decisive phase.

In this context,

I am happy that the intergovernmental negotiations on UNSC reform are now at a defining moment with an overwhelming majority of the membership articulating itself in favour of expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

It is, therefore, imperative that the General Assembly also move for its revitalisation. This is critical so that the General Assembly can play an effective role as the chief deliberative, legislative, policy-making and representative body of the international community.

India, a founding member of the UN, stands for a UN that is truly responsive to the priorities and aspirations of the Member States, particularly for the developing countries, who constitute the vast majority of the membership. Its working methods must also embody efficiency and transparency. Inability to reform runs the inherent risk of its marginalization in the international decision-making architecture.

Mr. President,

The UNGA resolution 63/309 adopted during the last session delineates the contours of the GA revitalization. The strengthening of procedures, working methods, documentation and ensuring due follow up are integral to the revitalization process. Enhanced visibility and outreach of the General Assembly are equally important. However, more important is the need to continue the focus on substantive measures to restore and enhance the role and authority of the General Assembly including in exercising control over legislation, material and manpower, and its role as the chief oversight organ of the United Nations.

Being the voice of the international community, the General Assembly must have a greater say in the process of selection of the Secretary General. The mandate for the appointment of the UN Secretary-General flows from Article 97 of the UN Charter, which envisages a role for both the General Assembly as well as the Security Council. However, the modalities of the appointment process have come to be governed by para 4(d) of General Assembly resolution 11(1) of 24 January 1946.

Since the adoption of resolution 11(1) over six decades ago, we live in a different world today. The need for changing the process of appointment of the Secretary-General has been recognized by all Member States. Fully cognizant of the imperative need, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 51/241 of 22 August 1997 and 60/286 of 9 October 2006, which outline in detail proposals on improving this process. Unfortunately, there has been no further progress. The General Assembly's role cannot be merely to rubber-stamp the recommendation of the Security Council.

Mr. President,

The revitalization process also implies that the General Assembly should take a lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the United Nations. Unfortunately, a perception has gained ground that the prerogatives and authority of the General Assembly have been undermined at the expense of the Security Council. Of special concern is the increasing role of Security Council on issues that traditionally fall within the General Assembly's competence, such as the process of standard-setting and codification of international law. Of concern also is the holding of thematic debates in the Security Council on issues that frequently fall within the purview of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council.

Serious introspection is needed by Member States to correct these aberrations. The balance between the principal organs of the United Nations, as envisaged in the Charter, must be maintained and respected. And, it is important that a truly representative body such as the General Assembly have a much greater say in the international economic and financial matters.

Mr. President,

We have the structure, framework and necessary tools in place to carry forward this process. The experience of the last session is anything but indicative of the challenges that lie ahead. What we need is the political will and courage to take bold decisions particularly on substantive elements, which are the *sine qua non* for the revitalization of the General Assembly. We are hopeful that this time, we would not falter and would be in position to make genuine substantive progress.

BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS