Security Council Open Debate on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security:
Interdependence Between Security and Development
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Statement by H.E. Mr. S. M. Krishna, Minister of External Affairs of India to the United Nations

I would like to begin by thanking the Brazilian presidency for organizing this debate. Brazil and India have a very special relationship. It is a great honour for me to make my first appearance in this Council under the Brazilian presidency. India returns to the Security Council after 19 years. These years have been transformational for India. We believe that an effective and efficient Security Council is in our common interest and we will work towards strengthening it.

Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our nation, said that "poverty is the worst form of violence". The Charter of the United Nations, recognizing that violence and the lack of development are interrelated, commits the United Nations to promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

The international community, over the past two decades, has invested a large amount of human and material capital in peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding initiatives. Our collective experience in dealing with these conflicts shows that without peace, development suffers. At the same time, the lack of development and prospects for economic progress creates fertile ground for violence and instability, which further set back development.

The unevenness of the development process and the disparities prevailing on a regional, national, and global scale feed into a vicious cycle. Our efforts should therefore focus on promoting development for all by encouraging economic activity and enhancing livelihood security.

India brings to this table almost 60 years of experience in overcoming many of the challenges of transforming a colonial legacy into a modern dynamic nation of a billion people who are trying to meet their aspirations within a democratic system dedicated to the rule of law. India has taken significant steps designed to accelerate the range and depth of welfare and social justice programmes. In recent years, they include the assurance of 100 days of employment to every person living in rural areas, the enactment of the Right to Information Act to help our citizens to become more aware, the right to education to help every Indian share in the benefits of the country's economic progress and also to contribute to it, and the initiative for reservation for women in Parliament and in state legislatures to ensure equal partnership of women in our progress and the increase in reservation for women to 50 per cent in local bodies.

Development has to be accompanied by inclusivity and tolerance. In that context, I quote the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh: "The goal of the development process must be to include every last member of our society, particularly those who are at the margins. This not only broadens the support base for development, it also strengthens the Government's ability to perform its core developmental roles."

The lessons of inclusivity can also be applied to international efforts in the maintenance of peace and security. The process of implementing a peace agreement must run along with the provision of humanitarian and emergency assistance, resumption of economic activity and the creation of political and administrative institutions that improve governance and include all stakeholders, particularly the weak and the underprivileged.

We are greatly encouraged by the African Union's efforts to develop post-conflict reconstruction capacities. The success of the New Partnership for Africa's Development — NEPAD — and the African Peer Review Mechanism has lessons that are relevant to national ownership.

The international community needs to ensure a predictable and enhanced flow of resources. It is instructive to note that the United Nations peacekeeping budget, which is about $8 billion annually, is more than the combined budgets of the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF. It is obvious that development expenditures need to be enhanced greatly if they are to make a dent on security problems. We also need to ensure that collective security mechanisms intersect with our collective efforts for economic progress to mitigate the causes of persistent insecurity at a global level.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi once said that "A nation's strength ultimately consists in what it can do on its own, and not in what it can borrow from others". The international community can encourage, motivate and facilitate. It cannot impose solutions. The temptation to create a new orthodoxy, of talking down rather than of listening, must be avoided at all costs.

No country has contributed as many peacekeepers to as many peacekeeping operations as India. Our peacekeepers have been early peacebuilders. We are also committed to contribute, bilaterally and multilaterally, to development initiatives. To that end, we are working through the IBSA — India, Brazil and South Africa — mechanism, with the African Union and with regional African groupings to promote South- South perspectives on development and security.

The international structure for maintaining peace and security and peacebuilding needs to be reformed. Global powers and the capacities to address problems are much more dispersed than they were six decades ago. The current framework must address these realities.

We understand the expectations that accompany our Council membership. We are acutely conscious of the need for effective coordination between the Permanent Five and the elected members, especially those whose credentials for permanent membership stand acknowledged. On issues concerning international peace and security, all of us are on the same page. I am happy to note that this process of closer cooperation is making headway.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming India's commitment to making its vast experience in more than six decades of nation-building available to global efforts towards greater development and improved security.