

INDIA AND UNITED NATIONS

As a founding member of the United Nations, India strongly supports the purposes and principles of the UN and has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter, and the evolution of the UN's specialized programmes and agencies. India's deepening engagement with the United Nations is based on its steadfast commitment to multilateralism and dialogue as the key for achieving shared goals and addressing common challenges.

India strongly believes that the United Nations and the norms of international relations that it has fostered remain the most efficacious means for tackling today's global challenges including those related to sustainable development, poverty eradication, environment, climate change, peace building and peacekeeping, terrorism, disarmament, human rights, migration and health and pandemics. The UN also has an important role in new emerging areas such as cyber security, space and frontier technologies like Artificial Intelligence.

India is steadfast in its efforts to work with the comity of Nations in the spirit of multilateralism to achieve comprehensive and equitable solutions to all global challenges. As a strong votary of reformed multilateralism, India favours a comprehensive reform of the United Nations and its institutions, to make them reflective of 21st century realities, thereby facilitating stronger collective action.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

India was among the select members of the United Nations that signed the Declaration by United Nations at Washington on 1 January 1942 and participated in the historic UN Conference of International Organization at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945.

India stood at the forefront during the UN's tumultuous years of struggle against colonialism and apartheid. India was the co-sponsor of the landmark 1960 Declaration on UN on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples which proclaimed the need to unconditionally end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. India was also elected the first chair of the Decolonization Committee (Committee of 24) where its ceaseless efforts to put an end to colonialism are well on record.

India was amongst the most outspoken critics of apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa. In fact, India was the first country to raise this

issue at the UN (in 1946) and played a leading role in the formation of a Sub-Committee against Apartheid set up by the General Assembly. When the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted in 1965, India was among the earliest signatories.

India's status as a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 cemented its position within the UN system as a leading advocate of the concerns and aspirations of developing countries and the creation of a more equitable international economic and political order.

Indian Contribution to United Nations Peacekeeping

India has a long and distinguished history of service in UN peacekeeping, having contributed more personnel than any other country. To date, more than 244,500 Indians have served in 49 of the 71 UN peacekeeping missions established around the world since 1948.

India has a long tradition of sending women on UN peacekeeping missions. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent for Formed Police Unit to the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia. Hailed as role models, they helped to build the capacity of the Liberian police which led to increase in the number of local women working in the Liberia's security sector. The members of Indian Women FPU also distinguished themselves through humanitarian service, including organizing medical camps.

Medical care is among the many services Indian peacekeepers provide to the communities in which they serve on behalf of the Organization. They also perform specialized tasks such as veterinary support and engineering services. Indian veterinarians serving with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), stepped up to help cattle herders who were losing much of their stock to malnutrition and disease in the war-torn nation. The Indian contingent in South Sudan has gone the extra mile by providing vocational training and life-saving medical assistance, as well as carrying out significant road repair work. The Indian contingent in the Upper Nile region (includes the Indian Battalion, the Horizontal Mechanical Engineering Company, the Level II hospital, the Petroleum Platoon and the Force Signal Unit) have all received UN medals of honour for their dedication and service in peacekeeping.

India has also provided 15 Force Commanders to various missions, and was the first country to contribute to the Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse,

which was set up in 2016. India's longstanding service has not come without cost. 170 Indian peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price while serving with the United Nations. India has lost more peacekeepers than any other Member State.

Representation in UN Bodies

India enjoys strong goodwill and support at the UN and has been elected to several UN bodies. In the last few years, India was elected to the Human Right Council (HRC), Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), International Court of Justice (ICJ), UN Board of Auditors, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), International Law Commission (ILC) and Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), among others. Currently India is represented in 22 UN Bodies.

India on the UN Security Council

India has served in the UN Security Council seven times (1950-51, 1967-68, 1972-73, 1977-78, 1984-85, 1991-92 and 2011-12). During its last term (2011-12) on the UN Security Council, India chaired the UNSC 1373 Committee concerning Counter-Terrorism, the 1566 Working Group concerning threat to international peace and security by terrorist acts and the Security Council 751/1907 Committee concerning Somalia and Eritrea.

India played an active role in discussions on all issues related to international peace and security, including several new challenges which the Security Council was called upon to deal with in Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. In view of the serious threat posed to international maritime trade and security by piracy off the coast of Somalia, India promoted concerted international cooperation against the pirates. At India's initiative, the Security Council mandated international cooperation for release of hostages taken by pirates as well as for prosecution of those taking hostages and those aiding and abetting the acts of hostage-taking.

In its participation in the decision making process at the Security Council, India underscored its commitment to promoting peaceful resolution of conflicts by diplomatic means, including by supporting regional efforts. India also worked for enhancing international cooperation in the areas of counter-terrorism, prevention

of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, and the strengthening of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

Reform & Restructuring of the UN

India strongly advocates the process of reform and restructuring of the UN to make it better equipped to effectively respond to the evolving needs of its membership, particularly developing countries. The expansion of the Security Council and improvement of its working methods must be integral part of Security Council Reform. It is essential that the Security Council is expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. The inclusion of countries who are capable of global responsibility regarding peace and security, including developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America, will contribute to optimal decision by the Council as well as address the concerns of the developing countries.

India is eminently suited for permanent membership of the UN Security Council by any objective criteria, such as population, territorial size, GDP, economic potential, civilizational legacy, cultural diversity, political system and past and ongoing contributions to the activities of the UN—especially to UN peacekeeping operations. India has affirmed its willingness and capacity to shoulder the responsibilities of permanent membership of the UN Security Council. India in collaboration with other like-minded countries actively participates in the efforts G-4 (India, Brazil Germany and Japan) and L.69 (Group of like-minded countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America) to push forward the inter-governmental negotiations in the UN on the question of reform and expansion of the UN Security Council.

Terrorism

The international effort against terrorism is a key priority for India in the UN. Terrorism is a global phenomenon whose destructive potential and lethal reach is enhanced by linkages to illicit trafficking in drugs and small arms, and international money laundering operations. Domestic measures alone cannot deal with terrorism as long as countries continue to provide safe havens for terrorists, therefore, to be effective, the fight against terrorism must be long-

term, sustained and global; it must tackle not just the perpetrators of the acts but also those who sponsor them.

India is a party to the 13 sectoral conventions on terrorism adopted by the UN. With the objective of providing a comprehensive legal framework to combat terrorism, India took the initiative to pilot a draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in 1996. A text of the Convention is being negotiated in the 6th Committee of the UN General Assembly. India also supports strict global implementation of anti-terrorism mechanisms established by UN Security Council Resolutions, including Resolutions 1267/1989 (related to sanctions against ISIS (Da'esh) and Al-Qaeda) and 1988 (related to sanctions against Taliban), 1373 (related to Counter-Terrorism Committee), and 1540 (pertaining to non-proliferation of WMDs), and other international mechanisms such as Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Human Rights

On human rights, India advocates a holistic and integrated approach that emphasizes the inter-dependence, inter-relatedness, indivisibility and universality of human rights. India's position reinforces the inter-relationship between democracy, development, human rights and international cooperation for development. India's participation in debates within the UN on this topic are guided both by India's status as the world's largest democracy, and by its experiences as a large developing country.

From a historical perspective, India played an active role in drafting the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and is fully committed to the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration. India is party to the five core human rights covenants/conventions, namely, the International Covenant on civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). India has also signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).

India was an active participant in the former UN Commission on Human Rights, of which it was a member since the Commission's inception in 1947. Following the replacement of the Commission by the Human Rights Council in 2006, India was elected to HRC five times (2006, 2007, 2011-14, 2014-17 and 2019-21) India has been actively participating in the new peer review mechanism of Universal Period Review (UPR) process in the Human Rights Council.

India started its latest three-year term to the Human Rights Council in 2019. It continued its engagement and participation in, *inter-alia*, sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC), annual forum meetings, intergovernmental working group proceedings, and human rights Treaty Bodies reporting process.

Development and Economic issues

Over the decades, India has urged the UN to play a more active role and be more effective in pursuing a more equitable international order and an economic environment that is conducive to rapid economic growth and development in developing countries. In the context of the new globalized system, India has also actively urged the UN to work to ensure that developing countries can harness the benefits of these processes in an equitable manner.

India has also consistently supported a higher profile and a more central role for the UN in consideration of developmental issues. Specifically, India has emphasized the need for enhanced flows of official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries--in particular, raising ODA from developed countries to 0.7% of their Gross National Income—transfer of technology to developing countries, more equitable terms of trade, accelerating industrialization, agricultural development and food security in developing countries.

India has exercised leadership on these issues in fora such as Non-Aligned Movement and the G-77 to ensure that economic development and eradication of poverty remain priority issues at the UN. India is a significant contributor to the core resources of the UN Development Programme, the UN Population Fund (UNFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme.

India at the 74th UNGA Session (2019-20)

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi led the Indian delegation to the High-level segment of 74th Session of the UN General Assembly (22-27 September 2019). He was accompanied by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister of State for External Affairs Shri V Muraleedharan and other senior officials. PM attended high level meetings viz. *Climate Action Summit*, *High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage*, and the *Leaders' Dialogue on Strategic Responses to Terrorist and Violent Extremist Narratives*. PM also announced the launch of the *Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)* and the initiative of the "*Leadership Group*", an outcome of the Industry-Transition Track that India co-led with Sweden as part of the Climate Action Summit.

During his visit to the UNGA, PM hosted two major plurilateral engagements, namely, meeting with the leaders of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) (24 September 2019) and meeting with the leaders of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (25 September 2019). This was the first time, Summit level meetings were held with these Groups and PM announced several measures for enhanced partnerships with countries belonging to these Groups.

Commemorating Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary at the UN

On the side lines of the 74th UNGA in New York, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi hosted a high-level event (24 September 2019) titled, "*Leadership Matters: Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in the Contemporary World*" to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The event was attended by the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, President of Republic of Korea Mr. Moon Jae-in, Prime Minister of Singapore Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Bangladesh Ms. Sheikh Hasina, PM of Jamaica Mr. Andrew Holness and PM of New Zealand Ms. Jacinda Ardern. Participating dignitaries paid rich tributes to Gandhian thought and ideals and the influence it had on their lives. On the occasion, the leaders jointly inaugurated the *Gandhi Solar Park* that was commissioned on the roof of the UN Headquarters. The project consisting of 193 solar panels, symbolic of the 193-member states of the United Nations, was

executed by the UN at a cost of US\$1 million. A *special postage stamp on Mahatma Gandhi* was also released on the occasion.

Significant Achievements (2014-20)

- The UNGA Resolution declaring 21 June every year as the International Day of Yoga was adopted in Dec 2014 with a record number of 177 co-sponsors. This set-in motion global annual observance of the International Day of Yoga.
- Usage of Hindi in UN public communications (UN news, weekly audio bulletins on UN radio and UN social media) began in March 2018 following the first MoU signed by the UN with any country.
- The first ever single-country South-South cooperation initiative at the UN was launched in June 2017 through the “India-UN Development Partnership Fund”, a \$100 million fund facility to undertake projects across the developing world. In April 2018, a US\$50 Million Commonwealth window was created under the Fund to support SDG related projects in developing countries of the Commonwealth.
- India worked closely with its partners in the UN Security Council to successfully accomplish the listing of Pakistan based terrorist Masood Azhar under the United Nations Security Council’s 1267 Sanctions Committee (May 2019) concerning Al-Qaida and ISIS (Da’esh) and associated individuals and entities, which was pending since 2009.
- India was elected to the Human Rights Council in Oct 2018 for the period 2019-2022 with highest number of votes (188/193).
- India was unanimously elected by ECOSOC for another three year term from 2020-22.
- At the virtual Session of the 73rd World Health Assembly in May 2020, India, along with over 60 countries, co-sponsored the resolution on Covid-19 pandemic. India was also elected the Chair of the Executive Board (EB) of the World Health Organization at the virtual meeting held on 22 May, 2020; Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, would be the Chairman of EB for the next one year.