



## Dialogue on Globalization

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# New Drivers for Global Change: India at the UN

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### India in the International Arena

As a founding member of the UN India has a long and active history of using international organizations to wield influence. Within the Group of 77 (G77), India has been acting as a speaker on behalf of poorer countries, while it currently no longer considers itself to be one of them. Former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru formulated the key policy pillars of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): respect for territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in domestic affairs, equality and mutual benefit, peaceful co-existence for international relations of non-aligned countries, all of which remain valid. In July 2006, the Indian government set up a Special Committee to mobilize the NAM. It will focus on economic and social issues as well as South-South cooperation.

### Indian Position on UN Reforms

The need for a comprehensive reform is at the core of India's current UN policy. India voices the concerns of many developing countries, urging the UN to become more representative of the contemporary world and more relevant to India's and developing countries' concerns and aspirations. Otherwise it is feared that the UN's ability to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals and on its Charter obligations would continue to be limited. Together with Brazil, South Africa, Egypt and other G77 member states, India has opposed some of the UN reforms advocated by the USA. For instance, India, which only moderately contributes to the regular UN budget (see table), opposed the USA, which tried to introduce a core group in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) out of the highest contributors to the UN budget. Yet for other management reform questions, such as the review of old UN mandates, which is also contested by many developing countries, India has left the usual coalition, and tactically sided with the US.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "As Praise Grows at Home, Envoy Faces U.N. Scorn." New York Times, p. 1, July 23, 2006.

### Reform of Security Council (SC)

The top priority of India's UN policy is to become a permanent member of the SC. In 2005 it joined the initiative of the G4 - together with Brazil, Germany and Japan. However, the G4 revived old tensions and has failed to get the necessary support from UN member states.

Recently, the Indian Ambassador sharply criticized the behavior of the current SC members.<sup>2</sup> Only by adding new permanent members to the SC who are committed to the principles and rules of the UN, further "encroachments" by the SC members could be prevented. By having additional permanent members elected and monitored by the GA, a real sense of ownership would be ensured. Following the logic used in the newly founded UN Peacebuilding Commission, countries like India who make significant contributions to peacekeeping missions should get a (permanent) seat in the SC "This is real efficiency and not the political Darwinism that some call efficiency."<sup>3</sup>

### Candidacy for Secretary-General (SG)

In a seemingly contradictory move, India decided to present its own candidate for the post of SG. According to standard procedures, SC members refrain from nominating candidates. The Indian candidate is Mr. Shashi Tharoor, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information. During his career, he served in the Office of the SG, as Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and on the staff of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. He is one of several highly qualified Indians who ascended to influential positions in the UN (see table below). In two informal voting procedures in July and September 2006, Tharoor received the second highest number of positive

<sup>2</sup> Ambassador Nirupam Sen at the Plenary Meeting of the GA on July 21, 2006, p. 1 (retrieved from [www.un.int/india/2006/ind1241.pdf](http://www.un.int/india/2006/ind1241.pdf) [accessed Aug. 14, 2006]).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.4.

votes from SC members, after the South Korean candidate, Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon.

### Terrorism and Disarmament

In the UN-discussion about a global counter-terrorism strategy, India calls for terrorism to be seen as a violation of the human rights to life and liberty.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, India views the Kashmir-conflict as an internal affair, opposing UN intervention.

India has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, because it felt that its concern for national security had been ignored. Instead, it calls for a global ban of nuclear weapons that is comparable to those on biological and chemical weapons, the minimum being a no-first-use convention. Likewise, India has not become a member of the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) but signaled a willingness to engage in the issue in 2004. India still produces landmines but does not export them. In the UN discussions about small arms, India is prepared to talk only about illicit trafficking, not controls and trade. Amnesty International holds India, along with the United States, Cuba, Iran, Israel and Pakistan responsible for the failure of the United Nations Small Arms Review Conference in July 2006.<sup>5</sup>

### Development

For India, the problems of economic development, especially the eradication of poverty and the development of social infrastructure, are integrally linked to peace and security. As part of the G77, India stresses that not all threats to security emanate from developing countries. It wants to direct the attention to systemic and structural problems that are besetting the world order. Also, India points out that it is giving more money to certain voluntary UN funds (e.g. UN Democracy Fund) than many OECD-countries and is asking industrialized countries to meet the 0.7% target for development assistance.

### Environment

India acceded to the Kyoto-Protocol in 2002. It is a member of numerous conventions on the preservation of biodiversity and the protection of its environment. Here, India is emphasizing the North's responsibility as the major polluter and associates itself with the G77 while granting support to the Small Islands Developing Countries (SIDS). It asks the North to reduce the costs for crucial technologies and to let developing countries participate in norm-setting and rule-making. It advocates for exceptions from Intellectual Property Rights on HIV/AIDS drugs and for technologies that help promote sustainable

development.<sup>6</sup> India accepted further obligations for reductions of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions while refusing (along with Japan and China) to join the US-led Asia-Pacific Partnership Initiative.<sup>7</sup>

**Table: India and the UN**

<b>Date of accession to UN:</b> Oct. 30, 1945
<b>Contribution to regular UN budget:</b> \$7.5 million (2005)
<b>Voluntary contributions:</b> UN Peacebuilding Fund (\$ 2 million); UN Democracy Fund (\$10 million)
<b>Contribution to peacekeeping (June 2006):</b> 8,570 troops, 390 police, 94 military observers (3rd from top)
<b>SC member:</b> 1950/51, 1967/68, 1972/73, 1977/78, 1984/85, 1991/92
<b>Important UN posts:</b> USG Mr. <i>Shashi Tharoor</i> (Communication and Public Information), USG Mr. <i>Vijay Nambiar</i> (Special Advisor, Policy Committee, Liaison to Permanent Representatives, Mr. <i>Arjun Sengupta</i> (Independent Expert of the Commission on Human Rights)
<b>Membership in Commissions and Committees<sup>8</sup>:</b> Peacebuilding Commission, Law Commission, Human Rights Council, Committee on Racial Discrimination (Vice-Chair), Committee on Indian Ocean, Governing Council UNEP, Panel of External Auditors (IMO, FAO, WHO), Joint Inspection Unit, UNDEF
<b># of NGOs from India registered with DPI<sup>9</sup>:</b> 32 (out of 1724)
<b># of registered partnerships with Commission for Sustainable Development active in India:</b> 21 (out of 321)
<b># of Indian enterprises participating in Global Compact:</b> 116 companies (out of 3709)

Source: Several UN websites: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

### Further Reading:

Indian Ministry of External Affairs, <http://meaindia.nic.in/>

Hansen, Keith A., (2006): The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty: An Insider's Perspective. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Statement by Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. Anand Sharma on June 19, 2006 at the 1st Session of the Human Rights Council, p. 3 (retrieved from [www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/statements/india.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/statements/india.pdf) [accessed Aug. 14, 2006]).

<sup>5</sup> Statement by Control Arms, July 7, 2006 (retrieved from [http://www.controlarms.org/latest\\_news/outcomerevconpr070706.htm](http://www.controlarms.org/latest_news/outcomerevconpr070706.htm). [accessed Sept. 25, 2006]).

<sup>6</sup> Statement by Secretary Prodipto Ghosh, Ministry of Environment & Forests at the High-Level Segment of the 14th Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development on May 11, 2006, p. 4 (retrieved from [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd14/statements/india\\_11\\_may.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd14/statements/india_11_may.pdf). [accessed Aug. 14, 2006]).

<sup>7</sup> Jürgen Maier, "Klimarahmenkonvention: 11. Vertragsstaatenkonferenz 2005, Kyoto Protokoll: 1. Treffen der Vertragsstaaten 2005," *Vereinte Nationen* 54, nos. 1–2 (2006), p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> For lack of space, this list is not exhaustive.

<sup>9</sup> Data on the number of NGOs registered with ECOSOC were not available.