

India 06.01.2012

Statement by Mr. Vinod K Jacob, First Secretary, at the Meeting of the Adhoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly on June 01, 2012

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

Let me start by placing on record the Indian delegation's happiness at the decision taken by you to convene this meeting.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on GA revitalization is an integral part of the on-going process of UN reform. One could quite rightly compare our Working Group, just like the Intergovernmental Negotiations on United Nations Security Council reform, to an airside transfer bus or apron bus that is used for transferring passengers from the airport terminal arrival or departure gate to the aircraft.

In our case, the current and yet to be revitalized General Assembly is the airport terminal arrival or departure gate, while the aircraft is the General Assembly we wish to see as a result of the process of the revitalization. Of course, there are no guarantees about snags during take-off and in mid-flight, but try we must!

In this regard, we should thank the Chef de Cabinet of the PGA for his briefing as well as the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for their insights as well on some critical elements of the revitalization process.

Co-Chairs,

India has consistently held the view that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the UN is respected both in letter and in spirit. The General Assembly should take the lead in setting the global agenda and restoring the centrality of the UN in formulating multilateral approaches to resolving transnational issues.

At the outset, we would like to align ourselves with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Before I proceed to elaborate our position on the issue of strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, permit me to outline our position on the balloting process and the prospective improvements being considered.

Co-Chairs,

India is no stranger to the application of newer and modern technologies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of electoral processes.

In our considered view, the revitalization process of the General Assembly will benefit immensely if we are able to introduce those technologies that are efficient, and that ensure the security and confidentiality of the voting process.

Co-Chairs,

We call for augmenting the resources to ensure the efficient and successful functioning of the office of the PGA in keeping with its dignity and prestige. In our mind, providing the resources in terms of protocol and security for the PGA needs to be done forthwith.

We also need to find ways and means to institutionalize the existing trust fund established to address the issue of the increasing financial burden associated with the enhanced activities and travel of the PGA. We need to have a sustainable system in place.

Co-Chairs,

There is a palpable desire among the wide UN membership to have a PGA's office that displays the highest standards of professionalism, neutrality and integrity. We, the member-states should help in this process. There are a number of steps that can be taken in this regard.

First, we need to maintain the fine balance between two factors relevant to the composition of the office of the PGA. On the one hand, we must ensure that the geographical balance of General Assembly membership is reflected in the composition of the Cabinet of the President of the General Assembly. On the other hand, we must apply this principle in synergy with a merit based system that helps the PGA assemble the most effective team.

Second, a certain degree of continuity between the incoming and outgoing Presidents and their Cabinets is necessary. There are many ways to do this, but we believe that the two Presidents are the best judges of how to go about the same.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

In conclusion, let me reiterate the Indian delegation's basic position that the General Assembly can be revitalized only when its position as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and in spirit.

We will continue to support your work in the future to ensure the success of our common endeavour to revitalize the General Assembly.

Thank you.

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