

Urging faster UN reform, India says world body should lead response to key challenges



S. M. Krishna, Minister for External Affairs of India

26 September 2009 – The United Nations should be at the forefront of multilateral efforts to resolve the world's most pressing challenges, India's Foreign Minister told the General Assembly today as he voiced frustration that reform of the Organization has not kept pace with international expectations or needs.

"It is imperative that the United Nations act in concert to coherently overcome" key challenges and crises such as climate change, extreme poverty, hunger, diseases and the recent global recession, S. M. Krishna **said** in his address to the Assembly's annual General Debate, held at UN Headquarters in New York.

Mr. Krishna said the UN stood at the "centre stage" of multilateralism and international cooperation and the vision enshrined in the world body's Charter – inclusiveness and collective action – "must be our lodestar, the guiding principle of all we undertake."

But he voiced concern that reform of the UN was too slow, especially given that four years have passed since the 2005 World Summit, when many proposals for change were floated.

The Foreign Minister said the 192-member General Assembly must be revitalized so that it has a stronger role as "the anvil of global deliberation," while the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) should also be at the heart of international efforts on development.

The Security Council, which currently has five permanent and 10 non-permanent members, has to become far more representative, with extra seats allocated to both categories of membership.

Speaking more broadly, Mr. Krishna said it was clear that international governance structures were clearly neither inclusive nor participatory, and had not been able to keep up with contemporary realities.

"The reform and restructuring of the global governance architecture is the critical need of our times and the voice of the developing world, including the small island nations and of Africa, is of principal and core relevance, if we are to have truly participatory and global responses to global challenges."

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