

The Republic of India

Positions for the General Assembly Fourth Committee

I. The Use of Space Technology to Promote Cooperation in Environmental Disaster Management

The launch of Sputnik into Earth's orbit marked the birth of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' (USSR) space program and kicked off the "Space Race" between the USSR and the United States of America (USA).¹ Until recently only a handful of Member States had the economic and technological prowess to send satellites into space, offering them a competitive edge in research, disaster management, and the appropriation of technology as compared to other States. Approximately a decade after the launch of Sputnik, The Republic of India established the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), with the primary objective of "promoting the development and application of space science and technology for the socio-economic benefit of the country."² India strongly believes that every state should have the opportunity to use all the technology at mankind's disposal to prevent loss of human lives due to environmental disasters. While we recognize the role technology has played in the recent past to warn us of impending dangers, we firmly believe that more can be done. India urges states with established space programs to share data regarding environmental disasters with states concerned so the information can be used promptly to limit loss of human lives. It is noteworthy that India is in an exciting position to lead the international charge in using space technology to promote cooperation in environmental disaster management due to the success of our space program and our collaboration and relationship with the international community.

In the decades following our independence from British rule, India lacked the economic ability to develop an advanced space program without foreign assistance. Therefore, ISRO launched its first domestic-made satellite, Aryabhata, in 1975 with the collaboration of the Soviet Union.³ The first satellite we launched from a domestic launch vehicle was in 1980, and building on its success ISRO developed two additional launch vehicles to place satellites into orbit. For India, the primary purpose of developing multiple domestic launch vehicles was to reduce dependence on foreign rockets and agencies. In addition to launching satellites into orbit and developing domestic launch vehicles, we also successfully launched a lunar probe (Chandrayaan-I) in 2008, which was responsible for finding the first evidence of frozen water molecules on the moon.⁴ Earlier in 2014, we launched five foreign satellites into the orbit on one of our missions, signaling our arrival in the league of states with some of the most successful space programs. In November 2013, ISRO launched a Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) to research the surface and atmosphere of the red planet. In an incredible feat our mission cost approximately \$75 million (about 1/10th the cost of NASA's MAVEN Mars Rover) and made India the first country to reach Mars on its maiden attempt.⁵ Although our space program has been successful, the fact remains that India is still a developing state. We understand the plight of other developing states when it comes to issues such as environmental disasters, as we too are still coming to terms with the impact of climate change. ISRO has also collaborated with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to evaluate the causes and consequences of climate change to better understand environment disasters as we recognize the external validity of research findings.⁶

India is willing to share data concerning climate disasters with other Member States in order to limit the impact of climate change, we also urge states with established space programs to share data that could decrease response time by monitoring real-time information about environmental disasters. We are willing to lead the way and create partnerships with states that may require our assistance or be a part of international consortiums that focus primarily on environmental disaster management. We understand that unpredictable weather patterns can severely delay information relay to certain regions of the world in case of an emergency, India calls upon the international community to come together and be willing to help their neighboring states or at-risk states by analyzing and providing data that may lead to shorter response times. We strongly believe that technology exists for the betterment of mankind and have complete faith that the correct use of space technology can aid states in preventing loss of lives and limiting damage in case of environmental disasters. India declares that it is committed to finding ways to use

¹ Hardesty, Von; Gene Eisman (2007). *Epic Rivalry: The Inside Story of the Soviet and American Space Race*

² "About ISRO." *Indian Space Research Organisation*. Department of Space, n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2014.

³ "Aryabhata" in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 15th edn., 1992, Vol. 1, p. 611

⁴ "Lunar Missions Detect Water on Moon." *VOA. Voice of America*, 02 Nov. 2009. Web. 12 Oct. 2014.

⁵ Amos, Jonathan. "India Mars Mission Arrives in Orbit." *BBC News*. BBC News, 24 Sept. 2014. Web. 16 Oct. 2014.

⁶ "U.S., India to Collaborate on Mars Exploration, Earth-Observing Mission." *NASA*. NASA, 30 Sept. 2014. Web. 22 Oct. 2014.

space technology to significantly reduce the adverse implications of environmental disasters and request that other states with established programs collaborate with all Member States to follow suit.

II. Addressing the Palestinian Right of Return

Since its creation in 1948, Israel has been at the center of conflict in the Middle East. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, Israel struggled with conflicts with neighboring countries. During this time, the Middle-East became more unstable and Israel became more aggressive toward Palestinian refugees. The UN has taken a more active role in the region over the past 10-15 years in order to mitigate the conflict and decrease the death tolls, which India supports. India supports further discourse on a possible 2-state solution which was formerly proposed by the UN, and has shown support for all UN actions which provide aid and resources for Palestine. India recommends that the committee consider the actions of our Development Partnership Administration when considering how to allocate aid and resources for refugees.

The instability and chaos in the region has been a result of prior actions by the UN influenced by certain powerful interests. Just as these powers sought control over India in the early 20th century for military and commercial gain, they have attempted to stake power in the Middle-East by supporting the creation of Israel. Palestine has a strong national identity, and the Western Powers' rejection of the disdain refugees have for their removal only prolongs the problems facing the region. Whole communities and families have been broken by Israel's continued occupation, and the marginalization of the Palestinian people prompts the growth of more hatred and terrorism within the region. We call on the U.N to more find a more adequate route of action in ensuring UNSC Resolution 242 is upheld. We also believe that Israel's denial of Democratic legitimacy in Palestine has had unintended ramifications on states around the world. Countries who have provided aid, instituted sanctions, or provided equipment are facing economic backlash from the economic disruption. India stands in strong support with Palestine, as the former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh explained, "Support for the Palestinian cause has been a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. I reiterated India's firm support for the struggle of the Palestinian people to achieve a sovereign, independent, viable and united state of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital." To protect the interests of countries the area of concern, and those in the rest of the world, India supports a 2-state solution similar to the UN Resolution 1397. Furthermore, we believe Palestinian refugees deserve funding to reimburse them for the resource deprivation they're facing currently⁷. We further encourage other powers to form organizations similar to our Development Partnership Administration to aid in the relief, as India has already chosen to do⁸. We also believe that countries with a vested interest in Israel's economic power have ignored violations of international law on their part, going as far back as the engagement in the Suez Crisis. India supports any measure taken by the U.N to bring peace to the region, and any action, which supports Palestinian autonomy and economic healthiness in the region. Unfortunately, the problem is seemingly only getting worse.

India supports a full investigation, at the least, into the hostility between Palestine and Israel, as we have supported beforehand⁹. India supports a move for the UN to recognize Palestine as an official state and encourage progress on a two-state solution. Being that India has supported Palestine's recognition as a state since its first proposal¹⁰, we will continue to support its recognition and encourage punishment toward states that defy international law and attempt to deny Palestine's legitimacy. India encourages the committee to go beyond just strong language and deploring actions in response to this crisis. Regional cooperation in helping refugees settle and receive aid, through private or public efforts, are suggested. Further, the upholding of fair international law and making statehood a reachable goal for Palestine are strongly called for. Investigating the conflict between Palestine and Israel would take a small allocation of agents by the U.N at very little cost. As for Palestine's recognition as a state, the costs incurred by the U.N would be minimum, if any, as it would only involve adding another delegation. In providing for refugees, India suggests that the U.N find other more adequate and efficient sources of resources. However, in the case that international law is broken and Palestine is not recognized, the UN must organize forces in the region to prevent further oppression and violence. This would come at a high cost. Other costs which may not be anticipated could include forming committees and organizing talks between the two parties involved. India supports the UN's involvement as a third party mitigating actor in the conflicts.

⁸ "India Gives \$10 Mn Aid to Palestine, Pledges Support." *FirstPost*. FirstPost, 11 Sept. 2012. Web. 22 Oct. 2014.

⁹ Chowdhury, Jhinuk. "India Voting for Palestine at UNHRC: Human Consideration over Material Realism." *India Voting for Palestine at UNHRC: Human Consideration over Material Realism*. RT Op-Edge, 31 July 2014. Web. 22 Oct. 2014.

¹⁰ *UNESCO. Executive Board; 131st Session; Request for the Admission of the State of Palestine to Unesco as a Member State* (n.d.): n. pag. UNESCO. UNESCO. Web.