India and UNO : Assessing India's Role in the Changing Context

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Abstract:
India was among the original members of the United Nations that signed the Declaration by United Nations at Washington D.C. on 1 January 1942 and also participated in the United Nations Conference on International Organisations at San Francisco from 25 April to 26 June 1945. As a founding member of the UNO, India always strongly supports the principles and purposes of The UNO and has made significant contributions in the implementations of the UN Charter, and the evolution of the UN's specialised agencies. India has been a non-permanent member of The UN Security Council for eight terms (a total of on-going 16 years) with the most recent being the 2021-22 terms. India is a member of G4, group of the nations who back each other in seeking a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. India has always advocated the real democratisation of the UN Security Council. The United Nations also has always been a useful instrument for India not only in pursuing its foreign policy goals effectively, but also for the progressive and peaceful transformation of the global political system. The changing priorities of India's political leadership, the challenge of reconciling subjective interests with objective principles, the non-working of Non-alignment and some other changing circumstances have worked as factors to create a mix of effects in India's performance in the world body the UNO. During the present times of change and new agendas, India's participation highlights concerns on reinforcing the core strengths of The UN in managing non-traditional security threats, including international terrorism, collective efforts for minimising the economic inequities, both within and between countries and lastly the restructuring the UN system particularly the Security Council composition through comprehensive reforms by common agreement.

Keywords: Internationalism, pragmatism, non-traditional threats to security, abolition of economic inequities and economic development, UN reforms.

I.   INTRODUCTION:

The United Nations (UN) was set up, 75 years ago, with the principal aim of maintaining world peace and security. It has been successful in the decolonization process and preventing another World War. However, the 21st century world is very different from that 20th century and poses many new problems and realities. The present humanitarian and economic losses associated with Covid-19 pandemic are comparable to that of major wars and unemployment is worse than at any time since the Great Depression 1929. This has highlighted the challenges pertaining to the multilateral UN system. Furthermore, there has been a general trend of increasing the number of challenges that are Trans-national in character (for example, terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, pandemics, climate crisis, cyber-security, and poverty). UN being the epitome of multilateral world order will be much needed in dealing with global issues. Therefore, reforms in the UN are necessary in order to strengthen the UN's effectiveness as a multilateral organization, bring more transparency to the institution and enhance its credibility.

The UN was established and desired too maintain peace all over the world and to establish international security as well as UN international law. International security and peace are the major components of the foreign policies of the countries that always follow the international laws. India has followed these policies before and after Its Independence. India has always supported the policies of "Live and Let Live" and "Vasudhaive Kutumbakam". These two principles has always remained the motto of UNO and League of Nations also. Therefore, for what principles UNO was established, India have these in its traditions and history. Besides, our nation has always opposed all type of exploitation, imperialism, colonialism and has supported the forms of governments based on justice and democracy. With this point of view, India have desire for an international organisation which may save the world from wars and may develop the system based on economic, social, political and real equality as well as freedom. India has always supported the freedom of un-developed and developing nations and their cooperation in world politics. India always raises these problems on the table

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of United Nations Organisation. India is the member of UNO since its origin and took part in all UN activities with democratic point of views. These international Policies of India are not based on formalities only but India always remains very active in the peace keeping activities of UNO world - wide.

II. WORLD PEACE STRUCTURE, BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE AND INDIAN CONTRIBUTION:

India not only supported the formation process of UNO but has always been committed to its basic principles and objectives. The then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said on November 3, 1948, while speaking to the UN. General Assembly, "India supports all UN charter and its principles. We are not only in favour of these, but also committed to implement these in to our national and international activities."[1] Nehru said while speaking from UN network in Newyork, "we have saved ourselves from the troubles of wars with the origin of UN system. Today, it is the only hope for peace among nations. India believers in UN system and implementation of UN Charter".[2]

All Principles of Indian national freedom struggle also have complete similarity with those of UN charter. The main principles of our freedom struggle were; world peace, problem solution with peaceful means, international economic and social cooperation and peaceful co-existence etc. Nehru adopted all these policies for foreign policy of India. India's Non-Aligned Movement was based on the same principles. Hence, these Indian ideals and principles are similar with those of UN charter.

India has always supported the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Therefore, India wants complete democratisation of the UN System. India wants complete coordination regarding this issue. The real democratisation will lead to the peaceful settlements for international disputes. Hence, this demand is based on morality, democratic world system and effectiveness[3]. Besides, the principle of Panchsheela was promoted during the India, China peace-pact regarding Tibet issue. The basic principle out of these was "Peaceful co-existence". This Indian Principle have always remain the base of UN functioning and it leads to international peace and prosperity. India's this principle was involved in the Sweden- Yougoslavia Pact of 1957. Panchsheela Principles were added in the preamble of this pact.[4] with reference to the same Sweden- Yougaslaviya Pact, the UN General Assembly prepared the peace declaration on "Friendship among nations and co-operation" on October 24, 1970. India was not only the member of this committee, but its role was very active and important. The main principles of this declaration were: No use of power, peaceful settlement of disputes, equal rights, self-decision to people, mutual faith, respect for national sovereignty, mutual co-operation, principle of non-interference etc. All these policies were prepared with Indian ideals and contribution.[5]

So far as the question of Basic Principles of International Peace are concerned, India's contribution for preparing these key principles for international peace have remained important on international levels. Before an analysis of peace principles, we have to understand the real meaning of peace. As prof. R.S. Yadav narrated that peace not only means the abolishment of wars or settlement of disputes or to avoid the disputes only. In details, peace means the all-round development of mankind so that peace should be established and maintained. Without human development, peace establishment is impossible.[6] For the establishment of world peace India have always opposed all type of colonialism world-wide. India not only fight against it but prepared a world-wide movement to curb colonialism. India fought for Indonesia's freedom in this context and raised this question in UNO in 1947. Jawaharlal Nehru called a conference of 18 nations in New Delhi in January 1949 for the solution of this problem. Nehru said at that time "we should oppose all type of imperialism not only in Asia but also at world levels. It will create problem for peace establishment."[7] With Indian efforts almost all the nations of Asia and Africa got independence till the last of the decade of 1950. Hence, India in the leadership of Nehru, opposed colonialism and all type of imperialism. For the empowerment of the basis of peace world-wide, India always opposed all type of Racialism, especially in the region of South Africa. India have opposed racialism and castism and have completely banned any type of discrimination in the chapter of Fundamental Rights of Its constitution.[8] India supported the U.N. declaration of Human Rights (1948) and have worked world-wide to curb racial-discrimination. Indian leadership opposed African racialism since 1946 onwards. However, due to lack of co-operation from US and British side, India faced many problems for the abolishment of racialism and to collect world opinion against it. Due to Indian efforts, the UN Security Council imposed sanctions against African governments and many onwards in 1965, 1971 also. With Indian efforts, at last anti-racialist government was established in Africa with the leadership of Nelson Mandela. Hence, India succeeded in empowering the world peace.

Besides, India has worked for the abolishment of poverty, un-employment and illiteracy on international levels. All these problems always remain obstacles for human development and world-peace. For the solution of these problems, India has worked with World Bank, International Development Organisation, and UN Technical Development Fund for the economic and technical help of poor countries. India has always played an active role on the platforms of UNESCO, WHO and ILO also. Due to the lack of its resources, Indian

role for the empowerment of developing and un-developed countries is remarkable. Thus, India strengthened the entire basis for peace establishment on world-level.

However, India opposed the NPT and C.T.B.T., because these Treaties are UN democratic and favours the selfish interests of developed nations. According to Indian point of view, these treaties should be modified according to the recommendations of the 18 nations committee under the supervision of UN general assembly in 1965.9 India wants real disarmament and arms control in the world but five permanent members wants this to be done by developing nations first. Hence, India has always opposed it.

III. INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS IN CHANGING CONTEXT:

With regard to Indian foreign policy, Nehru's leadership to the country in general is known as experimenting with what may be called proactive internationalism. Critics have pointed out that several initiatives in peace and security matters during Nehru's era were in favour of internationalism instead of protecting national interest in the International forums. But critics miss the point that, thanks to the emphasis on projecting soft power during Nehru's time, India gained prestige and respect on several international platforms. Whether in regard to peace making in the Korean peninsula, peacekeeping in the Suez and the Congo, participation in the establishment of disarmament and economic development, or the ideals of anti-colonialism and anti-racism, India gained its own identity. Only Nehru's proactive multilateralism could explain India's initiative to refer the Kashmir problem to the UN Security Council in 1948, which became a valuable example of the conviction. Remarkably, the initiatives of India at UN on the Indonesian, Palestinian and Korean problems proved an important attempt to assert India's leadership claims in taking up Asian issues and problems during the first decade of Independence. Similarly, Indian direction to pursue the complaint regarding racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa as a concern on all international platforms proved a remarkable contribution of India in abolishing racialism in all countries.

A redefinition of the Indian approach to the opportunities and limitations in the use of the UN System was observed under the leadership of Indira Gandhi in the 1970s and 1980s. India, at that time, adopted an approach to the UN—favouring certain major issues to be raised and pursued in the UN system. According to the new orientation, the UN was more appropriate to address larger and common issues, especially those that were related to the roles of big powers, The USA and USSR. Accordingly, India made a huge investment of time, energy and interest in raising and pursuing major issues like the establishment of the New International Economic Order (NEEO), the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace or prioritization of nuclear disarmament. Although, Rajiv Gandhi's leadership made some major changes in the Indira Gandhi government's foreign policy orientation. His initiative at the UN was to maximize the use of the UN system to seek concessions and commitments from major powers for liberal Indian economic policies and priorities. The Indian political leadership in the post-Indira Gandhi era since the early 1990s was also favouring liberal economic policies and national interests according to new Indian priorities of liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation. Now India favoured good relationship with both the power blocks; US and New Russia and also with countries favouring Indian priorities and new national interests.

Notably, after 1990, domestic problems including economic reforms, Kashmir issue, terrorism, coalition governments consumed the energies of nation. On the other side, the external environment during that period—characterized by the end of the Cold War, the emergence of the United States as the pre-eminent power in global politics and the erosion of the Third World solidarity—was emerging in new and changed international scenario. As a result, attention paid by the governments after 1990s on issues at the UN was not very warm and active. There are reasons to believe that, during that time, Indian leadership chose to keep their interest in the UN system at minimum. The military action against insurgents in Kashmir received negative outcome in terms of gross human rights violations and these circumstances put the Indian leadership in an awkward position at least during the first half of 1990s. The Security Council debate on the nuclear tests in 1998, which ended in the first-ever condemnation of the country's nuclear weapon tests made some notable distances between India and The UNO. India only plead for a permanent seat in the Security Council and the draft comprehensive counter-terrorism convention.

The Manmohan Singh government in India later on established formal ties with UN system and advocated for reforms in old UN System particularly for expansion of UN Security Council. While speaking in UN General Assembly during the 66th session of UNGA in New York, Dr. Manmohan Singh said that ," Efforts by India to promote international peace and security after it became a non- permanent member of The UNSC has enriched the policy making body's effectiveness."[10] So far as the Modi era is concerned, PM Modi virtually addressed The UN General Assembly on September 26, 2020. Modi pointed out the larger role of India at UNO and sad that," How long India would be kept out of the top UN decision making bodies." Modi said that the problems and solutions of the world in 1945 were quite different from today and He questioned the sufficiency of UN response on issues of terrorism, refugee crises and the Corona Virus pandemic. Modi explained the importance of India's expanded role at UN and its agencies .[11]

IV.   PRESENT SCENARIO AND CHALLENGES AGAINST MULTILATERALISM:

Conflict between the US on the one hand and China and Russia on the other has become a new reality in West-East Conflict. It may be called the rise of new cold war. Agitation of common people against Bladimir Putin in Russia and farmer's agitation against Modi in India have disturbed regional peace and however it is an internal matter of both the nations but let us wait what will be UN's reaction on it. The West is also divided**.** Despite the enduring post-War alliances, there is a growing divergence between US and its European partners on many global issues. Some of the differences between the US and the other powers are very visible in the Iran Nuclear Deal. Further, rejection of post-War multilateralism and post-Cold War globalism is at the heart of US "America First" foreign policy. The UN has become Ineffective and has been unable to respond effectively to the once-in-a-century global crisis triggered by the coronavirus. At the UN Security Council, China blocked a serious discussion on the origin and sources of the crisis. While the US walked out of the World Health Organisation on allegation of supporting China.[12]

V.   AREAS OF UN REFORMS:

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is the UN's main executive body with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. However, the veto powers possessed by the UNSC's five permanent members are used as an instrument to shore up their geopolitical interests, regardless of the disastrous consequences for the victims of armed conflicts all over the world. As it can be seen in Syria, Iraq etc. Further, It does not reflect today's distribution of military and economic power, nor a geographical balance with the context of population as well. Thus, the structure of the 15-member Security Council ought to be more democratic and representative. This has been long overdue on the demand, especially from the so-called Group of 4 (G4) countries — Brazil, Germany, India and Japan who advocate a permanent seat for all of them in the UN Security Council. The UN General Assembly (UNGA) can only make non-binding recommendations, which is another reason for ineffectiveness of the UN and another important issue of UN reform. So far as the reforms of the associated UN bodies is concerned, The Economic and Social Council has been criticized, as it has become overshadowed by institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, which are lacking democratic processes, transparency, and accountability. Further, UN's Financial Crisis are obstacles in its functioning It can be said that the UN has a lot to do but it has too little money, as it is in a permanent financial crisis due to the unwillingness of many members to pay their contributions on time. As long as the UN's budget remains tightly constrained, it cannot be effective. Toothless UN Peacekeeping Operation are examples of Its ineffectiveness While the vast number of international law treaties affecting international trade, economics and human rights has proved very effective, laws prohibiting the use of force have been less so. Hence, there is a need to carry out structural reforms for the UN peacekeeping operations all over the world for establishment of international peace.

VI.   INDIA'S ROLE IN REFORMING UN SYSTEM

Whether working for peace or development, the need to enhance the instrumental capacity of the UN has become critical to India and most other members at the UN in the new century. What seemed to have prompted India to take up UN reforms as its priority agenda is the progressive marginalization of the UN in promoting international economic and social cooperation and growing questions about the representative credentials of the chief security apparatus of the world organization in effectively mitigating traditional and non-traditional threats to peace. The question of greater equitable geographical representation in both the categories of the Security Council's membership has been a matter of great public interest in India. Understandably, ministers and officials have invested a great deal of interest and energy in making a case for, and in mobilizing necessary support for, more equitable geographical representation in the last two decades. The Indian wish list has evolved over the years to emphasize the need for expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, greater representation to developing countries reflective of contemporary world realities, provision for a time-bound review of the permanent membership and veto power, and comprehensive improvement in the working methods of the Security Council.

While the UNSC was dysfunctional, India developed a multilateral agenda of its own from decolonisation and disarmament to a new international economic order and mobilised considerable political support for it. This underlines the possibilities for shaping the global discourse in the present world scenario. Reforming UNSC is the basic requirement for democratisation of old UN system as former UN secretary general noted that "No reform of the UN would be complete without reform of the Security Council". Therefore, equitable representation as well as expansion of the UNSC is the desired reform that India envisages. However, this would be the most challenging aspect of UN reforms, as the all permanent five UNSC members have generally opposed to strengthening of the world's top organisation the UN institution and use their power to stop any significant change or reforms in any body of it. India is engaging with other multilateral forums and organisations for UN Reforms like BRICS, IBSA, SAARC, and ASEAN etc. to make world opinion for UN

democratisation**.** Possible solutions to reform UN finance organisations can be establishing a 'reserve fund' or even a 'world tax' system for better financial support to UN system. Also, in order to make UNGA more effective, India can propose a bicameral parliamentary assembly framework for UNGA.

India is trying for balancing its national interest with the context of multilateralism. The primary objective of India's present multilateralism should be to ensure its territorial integrity, especially at a time when China has adopted aggressive posture on Indian borders

Here, India can leverage multilateralism to serve India's interests like aligning with other countries or working with mechanisms like collective ideological negotiations to mount pressure on Pakistan to stop supporting cross-border terrorism in India. Further, while reclaiming its role in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), India must engage with other multilateral institutions as new rule-making as India is not at disadvantage if rule making takes place outside the UN.[13]

VII. INDIA AND NIEO:

Economic equality is required for the establishment of world peace among nations. India favours to establish the New International Economic Order (NIEO) in place of old economic world structure. The North-South matter of economic structure became popular after 1960. At last, India and other developing nations declared the establishment of New International Economic Order in the 6th special meeting of UN General Assembly on May 1st 1974.[14] India wants to establish New International Economic order with other developing. Nations because of the following reasons:

1) There exists so many imbalances in the existing world economic order and it needs changes.

2) The developing nations also require prosperity and independency.

3) The Northern countries are having 75 present resources and 25 present of population of the total world, Hence, the Northern countries should transfer the resources to Southern nations for economic balance.

4) The higher techniques should also be transferred to Southern nations.

5) The third world countries should be involved in the markets of developed nations to establish economic balance in the world.

Regarding all the above problems, India have always stood with the developing countries and also leaded them for the self- dependency of the southern nations. India favours South-South dialogue, so that these nations may increase their economic resources. However, during the present changing economic circumstances, India is moving towards western nations for economic aid and technical help. India has adopted the policies of economic liberalization and globalisation. Nevertheless, it does not mean that India has left the demand for NIEO but India is having good efforts to establish NIEO worldwide. India wants to establish regional economic self-dependency and economic prosperity. These efforts will lead to the establishment of NIEO. Therefore, IBSA Forum (India-Brazil-South Africa Forum), BRICS Forum (Brazil-Russia- India- China and South Africa Forum), ASEAN, SAARC, SAPTA and G-77 Groups are working and struggling for NIEO.

VIII. INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE:

India have been a leading nation for contribution in establishing "Peace" over the world with UNO.[15] India cooperated for peace in Koria, Kambodia, Viet-naam, Lebnaan, Iraq, Iran, Yougoslaviya and Ravanda conflicts (Wars). UNO gave many responsibilities to India regarding peace issues. During Koriyan war, India was given leading role and was made chief of the UN armed forces and soldiers deployed there. India was nominated as chief of UN peace commission during Indonesiyan conflict of 1954. India played very important role during Kango conflict in 1960 to 1963. Nevertheless, from 1948 to till date, India participated in UN peace army many times and Indian armed forces were sent to establish peace in war- areas all over the world. During these wars, many of Brave Indian soldiers died and were named as "Brave Martyrs of the world" and they were given so many army awards by UNO. Doubtlessly, India has played a very important role for the establishment of world peace. Hence, India's role is remarkable in this peace-keeping efforts.[16]

IX. CONCLUSION:

History teaches the fact that crises catalyse states to rise above inertia, myopia, and narrow self-interest. This can be reflected in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, conferences at Bretton Woods and San Francisco in the 1940s. The present pandemic era is similar to the crisis that can lead to tectonic shift in world affairs. Further, given the global issues, today the world needs multilateralism more than ever. Thus, it is necessary to reform the old UN system. In this context, India must utilize the next two years of its non-permanent member of UNSC for bringing much needed reforms in the system.

The success of India's role at the UN in coming years will depend on its continued ability to present itself to the world at large as a mature, world-oriented and forward-looking country to work in, with and for the UN system. Whether the years in the new millennium will be a challenge or an opportunity for India at the UN will not be easy to answer in terms of new world scenario. But the enabling political environment in the

neighbourhood and elsewhere, the UN may provide India plenty of options to exploit opportunities to mitigate common problems. The future challenges for India at the UN include working for a stable world order while at the same time supporting peaceful change, projecting the country's leadership as mature and statesmanlike, safeguarding its security interests from any attack at the UN, working for a reformed UN that allows a prominent place to India. Keeping in view its achievements and potential and to contribute to strengthening the capacity of the UN in the management of global problems like equal development for all nations under the shadow of economic globalization, spread of terrorism, democracy deficit in international and internal structures of governance. However, as India's role and its responsibilities are growing. In the long run, India needs to shed its excessively reactive role and try to be more proactive in launching well-timed initiatives after undertaking necessary intellectual and brainstorming work to construct a robust vision on effective mechanisms and methodologies for addressing global priorities. Summing up, it will be in India's interest to see the UN succeeds, just as the UN will derive great satisfaction if India makes successful transition from a developing to developed society.

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