Chapter- 4

INDIA AND UN ON MAJOR WORLD ISSUES
The United Nations, since its birth in 1945, has proved to be a unique experiment for the world community of nations. Born as an 'embodiment of the will of the peoples of the world', the United Nations has served as a repository of collective wisdom and a forum for joint action for each of its Member States, in their search for a better, safer, healthier and a more prosperous existence.

As a founder member of the United Nations, India has been a firm supporter of the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations, and has made significant contributions to the furtherance and implementation of these noble aims, and to the evolution and functioning of its various specialized programmes. It stood at the forefront during the UN's tumultuous years of struggle against colonialism and apartheid, its struggle towards global disarmament and the ending of the arms race, and towards the creation of a more equitable international economic order. As the world stand at the beginning of the 21st century, new challenges are before us. Freed from the shackles of the Cold War, the UN stands poised to grapple with the changes which the world has witnessed over the years. Today's challenges, be they political, economic, social, environmental or demographic, are global, impinging on the affairs of all States and making the interdependence of peoples so much greater. If this demands a greater dependence on the UN as the only democratic, universal forum
for the community of nations, it also demands a strengthening of the UN itself and its revitalization. The ongoing reform process is primarily aimed towards these ends. A revitalized and strengthened United Nations and a more representative Security Council will enable this unique organisation to face the challenges of the 21st century more effectively.

As the United Nations strives to find solutions to these issues, India pledges to work, with abiding faith and hope, towards UN's success, and to assume greater responsibilities that the world community expects from it.

**UN Reform Process**

Reform and improvements are an intrinsic part of any organization which has to serve the needs of a changing environment. The United Nations is no exception. India supports a strengthened and revitalized United Nations with its various organs functioning within their mandates in accordance with the UN Charter. India supports an enhanced role for the United Nations in development and development cooperation dialogue. India firmly believes that development should be central to UN's agenda and be pursued in its own right. It is an indispensable prerequisite to the maintenance of international peace and security.
India has actively participated in all reforms and restructuring exercises that could enhance the capacity of the UN in the fulfillment of its primary tasks. India actively supported the establishment of UNICEF on a permanent basis, the creation of the UN Development Programme, establishment of UNEP and restructuring of the UN in the economic and social fields. It was also represented in the High Level Expert Group established by the UN Secretary-General in the mid-nineties on the financing of the UN. It participated constructively in the discussions on the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development. India was also one of the co-chairs of the Working Group on Strengthening of the United Nations.¹

India has been supportive of the UN Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan's reform proposals. While some of these have been agreed and implemented, discussions continue on others. An important proposal is the holding of the Millennium Assembly. India believes that the Millennium Assembly must identify concrete goals for the promotion of development cooperation and disarmament and must also provide the United Nations with the required resources to effectively tackle these challenges.

India shares the concerns for improving efficiency, avoidance of duplication, and the minimization of waste in the functioning of the entire
UN system. While efforts for these objectives need to be intensified, India believes that the Member States should pay their contributions unconditionally, in full and on time, as delays in payments have caused an unprecedented financial crisis in the UN system. Contributions of the Member States should have, as their fundamental underpinning, the capacity to pay principle. Financial reforms hold the key to the future of the world body. Without sufficient resources, the UN's activities and role would suffer.

The United Nations as a universal forum should have as its guiding principles transparency, non-discrimination, consensus, and equal respect for the dignity of all individuals, societies and nations. Be it world trade, environment and development, resolution of the global debt crisis, or economic assistance for the poorest members of the world community, these values have to be the touchstone of global initiatives and actions.

The composition of the Security Council has remained largely static, while the UN General Assembly membership has expanded considerably. This has undermined the representative character of the Council. An expanded Council, which is more representative, will also enjoy greater political authority and legitimacy.
In 1965, the membership of the Security Council was expanded from 11 to 15. There was no change in the number of permanent members. Since then, the size of the Council has remained frozen. Even more dramatic than the increase in the number of Member States of the UN, is the change in composition of the General Assembly. The overwhelming majority of the UN General Assembly members today are developing countries. They are also, most often the objects of the Council's actions. They must have a role in shaping those decisions which affect them. The present composition of the Security Council, particularly the permanent members' category, is weighted heavily in favour of industrialized countries. This imbalance must be redressed in an expansion of the Council, by enhancing the representation of developing countries in both permanent and non-permanent members' categories.\(^2\)

Activities of the Security Council have greatly expanded in the past few years. The success of Security Council's actions depends upon political support of the international community. Any package for restructuring of the Security Council should, therefore, be broad-based. In particular, adequate presence of developing countries is needed in the Security Council. Nations of the world must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity are factored into the UN's decision making. Any expansion of permanent members' category must be based on an
agreed criteria, rather than be a pre-determined selection. There must be an inclusive approach based on transparent consultations. India supports expansion of both permanent and non-permanent members' category. The latter is the only avenue for the vast majority of Member States to serve on the Security Council. Reform and expansion must be an integral part of common package prosperity are factored into the UN's decision making.

Development

The UN cannot avoid its development responsibilities. Much needs to be done-the international community has to go a long way in meeting the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GDP agreed nearly a quarter century ago. According to the report of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic co-operation and Development, overseas aid from 21 richest OECD countries fell from 0.25 per cent of combined national income in 1996 to 0.22 per cent in 1997. According to the same report, development aid has fallen by 20 per cent in real terms since 1992. India herself is a developing country and she has consistently been a strong supporter of the UN activities of development in other developing countries.3

India is one of the largest contributors to the core resources of UNDP and a significant contributor to those of UNFPA and UNICEF.
India is also a major contributor to the core resources of and the World Food Programme. India's contribution to these funds is higher than that of many OECD countries. We hope that the developed countries will also increase their contributions to untied and apolitical resources for development.

India has contributed US $ 100,000 to the UNCTAD Trust Fund for the least Developed countries. It has also been contributing US $ 50,000 per annum to the ITC Global Trust Fund since its inception in 1996. It also makes substantial voluntary contributions to UNEP, Habitat, UN Drug Control Programme, UNRWA, UNIFEM UN Volunteers etc.

**Disarmament**

Since independence, India has consistently pursued the objective of global disarmament based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and effective compliance. Given the horrific destructive capacity of nuclear weapons, India has always believed that a world free of nuclear weapons would enhance both global security and India's own national security. Thus India has always advocated that the highest priority be given to nuclear disarmament as a first step towards general and complete disarmament. India has played a consistently positive and energetic role in UN efforts for disarmament and arms control.⁴
As early as 1948, India called for limiting the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only and the elimination of atomic weapons from national armaments. India was the first country to call to an end to all nuclear testing in 1954. This was followed up in subsequent decades by many other initiatives, for example, on the Partial Test Ban Treaty, and the call for international negotiations on nuclear non-proliferation. In 1978, India proposed negotiations for an international convention that would prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. This was followed by another initiative in 1982 calling for a 'nuclear freeze' - i.e. prohibition on the production of fissile material for weapons, on production of nuclear weapons, and related delivery systems. At the special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, India put forward a number of serious proposals including the 1988 Comprehensive Plan for total elimination of weapons of mass destruction in a phased manner. It was a matter of regret that the proposals made by India along with several other countries did not receive a positive response and instead, a limited and distorted non-proliferation agenda, meant above all to perpetuate nuclear weapons was shaped.

India was compelled by considerations of national security to establish and adopt a policy of keeping its nuclear option open while it
continued to work for global nuclear disarmament. India's nuclear capability was demonstrated in 1974. India exercised an unparalleled restraint in not weaponising its nuclear capability. It is relevant to recall, that during this period, when we voluntarily and totally desisted from testing, over 35,000 nuclear weapons were developed through a series of tests by states possessing nuclear weapons. This has happened even as Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty committed the Nuclear Weapons States, party to the NPT, to take steps in good faith for nuclear disarmament. India was obliged to stand apart on the CTBT in 1996 after having been actively engaged in the negotiations for two and a half years precisely because the issues of non-proliferation, global disarmament and India's concerns about her security and strategic autonomy were ignored.5

India's continued commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is clear from the voluntary measures announced by India after undertaking a limited series of underground nuclear tests last year. India remains committed to converting its voluntary moratorium into de jure obligation accordance with our long held positions disarmament, and in response to the desire of the international community that the CTBT should come into effect in September 1999. India has declared that it will maintain minimum credible nuclear deterrent and will not engage in an arms race. India has declared a no-first-use doctrine. We are willing

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to strengthen this commitment by undertaking bilateral agreements as well as by engaging in discussions for a global no-first-use agreement. India believes that a global no-first-use agreement would be the first step towards the delegitimization of nuclear weapons. India remains the only state possessing nuclear weapons to unambiguously call for a Nuclear Weapons Convention to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons just as the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) have banned the other two categories of weapons of destruction.

**Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation**

In 1996, India, along with the members of the Group of 21 countries, put forward proposal, submitted to the Conference on Disarmament, of a Programme of Action calling for a phased elimination of nuclear weapons (1996-2020). India has unambiguously indicated its commitment the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to negotiate global nuclear disarmament. India is also the only state with nuclear weapons, which responded positively to certain aspects of the 8-Nation initiative on disarmament, entitled ‘Towards a Nuclear Weapon Free World’, put forward in June 1998 by Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden. At the NAM Summit in Durban, at India's initiative, NAM
agreed that an international conference be held, preferably in 1999, with the objective of arriving at an agreement, before the end of this millennium, on a phased programme for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. The call for the elimination of nuclear weapons was reiterated once again by Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee address to the UN General Assembly in 1998. India remains committed to co-operate with like minded states to attain this goal. India also introduced a resolution in the 53rd General Assembly calling for reducing nuclear danger by de-alerting nuclear weapons.6

India is fully committed to the goal of curbing nuclear proliferation in all its aspects. It was at India's initiative that the item non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was included in the agenda of the UN in 1964. In 1965, India along with other like-minded countries submitted a joint memorandum towards achieving a solution to the problem of proliferation; it included the conclusion of an international nuclear non-proliferation treaty. However, the NPT as it emerged from these negotiations, was flawed and discriminatory, seeking to create a permanent division between the nuclear 'haves' and 'have-nots'. India believes that the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT in May 1995 has only served to legitimize nuclear arsenals of the NPT states possessing nuclear weapons into perpetuity, thus posing a major obstacle

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to the goal of global nuclear disarmament. The NPT Preparatory Commission meetings held in 1997 and 1998 have also clearly demonstrated the reluctance on the part of the states possessing nuclear weapons to take steps towards a speedy process of global nuclear disarmament.

India has developed wide-ranging expertise in nuclear technology and ensured through a stringent and effective system of export controls that there is no proliferation of these technologies for weapons purposes. India's record in this matter is, in fact, better than some of the NPT signatories. At the same time, world is against ad hoc regimes or cartels which restrict high technology in an arbitrary, unequal and patently discriminatory manner. They need to be universalised, made transparent and equitable.

**Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty**

India's commitment to a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing dates back to 1954 when Jawaharlal Nehru called for a ‘standstill agreement’ whereby testing of all nuclear weapons was to be immediately suspended, pending an agreement on their complete prohibition. It was again at India's initiative that the item ‘Suspension of Nuclear and Thermo-Nuclear Tests’ was included in the agenda of the UN in 1959.
During the course of the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva on the CTBT, India put forward a number of proposals consistent with the mandate adopted by the CD in 1994. These proposals were aimed at ensuring that the CTBT would be truly comprehensive and would be part of the step-by-step process of eliminating all nuclear weapons. However, these proposals were regrettably ignored and instead, Article XIV on Entry into Force requiring India to join the treaty before it became operational was adopted in violation of basic treaty law. India was thus forced to declare its opposition to the CTBT as it emerged.

After concluding a series of tests on May 13, 1998, India immediately announced a voluntary moratorium on further underground nuclear test explosions. In announcing this moratorium, India accepted the core obligation of a test ban and also addressed the general wish of the international community. India also announced its willingness to move towards a de jure formalization of the voluntary undertaking. India is now engaged in discussions with key interlocutors on a range of issues, including the CTBT. India is prepared to bring these discussions to a successful conclusion. For the successful conclusion of talks, creation of a positive environment by India's interlocutors is a necessary ingredient.
India expects that other countries, as indicated in Article XIV of the CTBT, will adhere to this Treaty without conditions.\textsuperscript{7}

**Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)**

India supports the ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes. This demand has been articulated by India in the UN through concrete proposals like the Action Plan which it presented in 1988. India also co-sponsored a UN General Assembly resolution (48/75 L) in 1993, which called for an early commencement of negotiations for the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. India has joined the consensus in the Conference on Disarmament on establishing an ad hoc committee to negotiate a FMCT. India believes that this is an integral part of the nuclear disarmament process. It would also go a long way in arresting problems of illegal transfers of nuclear material. India supports efforts for negotiations on a universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty that would prohibit the future production of fissile material for weapons purposes but would permit such production for civilian uses.
Negative Security Assurances (NSAS) and Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs)

India has always maintained that NSAs provide illusory benefits, and that the real security assurance is complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and also that in the interim, if NSAs are to be given, they should be provided through an international, comprehensive, legally-binding and irreversible agreement. Similarly, consideration of security assurances in the narrow strait-jacket of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZS) cannot do justice to the wide variety of concerns that emanate from the global nature of the threat posed by nuclear weapons. As a responsible state possessing nuclear weapons, India has stated that it does not intend to use nuclear weapons to commit aggression or for mounting threats against any country. India respects the sovereign choice exercised by states not possessing nuclear weapons in establishing NWFZs on the basis of agreements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned. At the fifth session of the ASEAN Regional Forum in Manila, India stated that it fully respects the status of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South East Asia and is ready to convert this commitment into a legal obligation. India will remain responsive to the expressed need for commitments to other nuclear weapon free zones as well.⁸
Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

India is an original signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention, having signed it on 14th January 1993, and was among the first 65 countries to have ratified the Treaty. The universal and non-discriminatory character of the CWC is primarily responsible for the large number of signatories and the equally large numbers of ratifications. The implementation of the CWC involves a combination of voluntary declarations and mandatory verification arrangements aimed at ensuring compliance in a transparent and universal manner. A National Authority has been set up to oversee implementation of the Convention in India. As the first Chairperson of the Executive Council of the Organization for Chemical Weapons (OPCW), India guided the deliberations of the organization during its crucial first year. Implementation of all obligations assumed by India to the Convention and related activities has proceeded satisfactorily. India believes that the provisions of the Convention require to be implemented in a non-discriminatory manner. National implementing legislations containing provisions which undermine the Convention hold out the prospect of leading to matching responses by other states parties thereby leading to an unnecessary dilution of the spirit and the confidence reposed in the CWC by a great majority of countries party to the CWC. Similarly, the existence of technology denial regimes such as the Australia Group remains an aberration when seen against the large number of ratifications enjoyed so far.
Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)

India ratified the Biological Weapons Convention in 1974. India has participated in all four Review Conferences of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and in the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts. India is currently participating in the negotiations of the Ad hoc Group of the States Parties of the BTWC with the aim to strengthen the convention by a protocol, including possible verification measures. India maintains that these measures should be non-discriminatory and avoid any negative impact on scientific research, international cooperation and industrial development.9

Anti-Personnel Landmines (APLS)

India is fully committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines and achievement of the objective of a nondiscriminatory and universal ban on APLS. A beginning can be made with a ban on export and transfer of APLS, that would enjoy an international consensus, and by addressing humanitarian, concerns and legitimate defence requirements of states. India is sensitive to the humanitarian aspects of the landmine crisis and the need for a strong international response. Aware that APLs have been used indiscriminately in conflicts not of an international nature, India has called for a ban on their use in all internal conflicts. India follows a conscious policy of not
exporting APLS. India has also been contributing to UN demining efforts since the Congo peacekeeping operations in 1963. An officer of the Indian Army is presently deployed with the UN Mine Action Centre in Bosnia. India is presently in the process of ratifying amended Protocol II of the 1980 Inhumane Weapons Convention (CCW), which deals with anti-personnel landmines. India stands ready to negotiate a ban on the export and transfer of landmines in the Conference on Disarmament.

Transparency in Conventional Weapons Transfers and Small Arms

India is committed to strengthening the norm of transparency in conventional armaments in general, and greater participation in the UN Register of Conventional Arms in particular. India has reported to the Register annually since 1994. The issue of proliferation of, and illicit trafficking in, small arms has moved up the agenda of the international community on disarmament issues. India is acutely aware of this problem and intends to participate actively in international search for effective solutions, including a proposed international conference to discuss the issue of illicit trafficking in small arms in all its aspects.

Environment

India is among the top 12 mega centres of the world in terms of its genetic diversity. It has a wide range of geoclimatic conditions and a rich and varied flora and fauna, as well as a long standing tradition of
environmental sensibility and concern that goes to the very roots of its millennia-old culture. Harmony with nature has been an integral part of the ethos of Indian society.

The then Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, was the sole foreign head of state or government to participate in the United Nations Conference on Human Environment held in Stockholm in June 1972, at a time when international concern over environmental issues was yet to fully crystallise. At that session she emphasised that the environmental concerns cannot be viewed in isolation from developmental imperatives.

India considers environmental and developmental issues to be closely intertwined. It fully supports international cooperation in the field of the environment so as to effectively deal with global environmental problems. It is committed to a global partnership that simultaneously seeks to protect the environment while addressing the development requirements and aspirations of the developing countries.10

India has consistently played an important role in the evolution of an international consensus to tackle major global environmental issues. It was an active participant in the process leading up to and culminating in the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in June, 1992. The Rio Conference
affirmed the importance of sustainable development, which encompasses both development and environmental protection. Agenda 21, adopted by the Rio meet, provides a blueprint on how to make development socially, economically sustainable. Despite constraints, India has initiated several activities and programmes in the context of Agenda 21, which are consistent with its national goals and objectives. India is a party to numerous multilateral environmental conventions which contribute to the protection of the environment and to sustainable development. These include the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International importance, the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes, the Convention on Combating Desertification, and the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna. India is also an active member of the Commission on Sustainable Development that was set up after the Rio Conference to monitor the implementation of Agenda 21.

India is among the leading countries in the vanguard of efforts directed at environmental protection. It has in position an elaborate framework of environmental legislation for the conservation of forests,
preservation of wildlife and the control of water, air and soil pollution. It has a network of protected areas converting 84 national parks and 447 wildlife sanctuaries. India has also introduced the Eco-Mark label for environment-friendly products, requires the undertaking of Environment Impact Assessment before commencing major industrial projects, and has in position functioning Environmental Tribunals as well as an effective system of Environmental Audit.\textsuperscript{11}

At the Special Session of the UN General Assembly held in June 1997 to review the progress made five years after the Rio meet, India expressed its disappointment over the lack of fulfillment at the international level of commitments voluntarily undertaken by the industrialised countries at Rio. On its part, India reiterated its commitment to the global partnership established at Rio de Janeiro.

\textbf{Human Rights}

In India the concept of human rights emphasizing pivotal position of individual citizen stretches back to the first millennia. Human rights have been an inherent component of various philosophies that have flourished in India. The leaders of the Indian National Movement stressed the primacy of human rights in the future constitutional set-up. The Indian Constitution, as a result, stands as one of the most comprehensive and self-contained documents on human rights.
India took active part in drafting of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Dr (Mrs). Hansa Mehta, a Gandhian political activist and social worker who led the Indian delegation, had made important contributions in drafting of the Declaration, especially highlighting the need for reflecting gender equality. India is fully committed to the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration. India is a signatory to the six core human rights covenants, and also the two Optional Protocols to the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

India has been advocating a holistic and integrated approach that gives equal emphasis to all human rights, based on their interdependence, inter-relatedness, indivisibility and universality, and reinforces the inter-relationship between democracy, development, human rights and international cooperation for development.\(^\text{12}\)

India had played an active role as member of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) since its creation in 1947. India was elected in 2006 as a member of the newly established Human Rights Council (HRC), which replaced the CHR, by securing the highest number of votes among the contested seats. India was re-elected again as a member in 2007 by securing the highest votes by polling 185 votes out of 190 votes cast. India attaches great importance to the Human Rights Council and is committed to make the Council a strong, effective and efficient body.
capable of promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

The National Commission for Human Rights (NHRC) established in India in 1993, serves as an independent and autonomous body for protection of human rights in the country. The Commission is now very much part of the life of the nation and, increasingly, of consequence to the quality of its governance. Awareness of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and included in the international instruments to which India is a State party, has increased dramatically in the country.

The enactment by the Indian Parliament in August, 2005 of a Rural Employment Guarantee Act, providing for 100 days of assured employment in a year to every rural household, is a step in the direction of ensuring justiciability of economic and social rights. The Right to Information Act passed by the Indian Parliament in 2005 is a testimony to India’s commitment for providing access to information to the citizens.

India is fully committed to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. India adopted a rights-based approach to promoting equality of women and evolved a multifaceted strategy aimed at their empowerment through awareness-raising, political participation, economic independence, education, health, and legal standards. The
objective is to enable women to overcome disadvantages that they face and to enable them to play an effective role. Among the most important of these measures include reservation of one-third seats in local and village-level bodies, and formulation of National Policy for the Empowerment of Women in 2001, provision for immediate and emergency relief to women in situations of domestic violence, amendment to the Hindu Succession Act to give daughters and widows equal right in ancestral property including agricultural land, dowry prohibition and prevention of immoral trafficking and equal role in society.\textsuperscript{13}

India adopted a National Charter for Children in 2003 to reiterate its commitment to the cause of the child in order to see that no child remains hungry, illiterate or sick. The right to free and compulsory education for all children, in the age group of 6 to 14 years, has been made a fundamental right in 2002 by an amendment to the Constitution. India has a proactive stand on the issue of child protection and in creating a protective environment for children. Towards this end, India has undertaken several initiatives, notably a National Commission for Protection of Child’s Rights has been set up in February 2007 to provide speedy trial of offence against children or of violation of child’s rights, thus ensuring effective implementation of laws and programmes relating
to children. Eradication of child labour in all occupations and industries is one of the most important priorities of the Government of India. The National Human Rights Commission and the civil society, including non-Governmental organisations, have been supplementing Government’s efforts in eradication of child labour in the country.

The rights of vulnerable groups have received special mention in India ever since independence and the Constitution itself contains extensive provisions for the promotion and protection of the rights of all minorities, including some special groups of people unique to Indian society known as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These measures have been further strengthened through a recent amendment of the Constitution granting the Scheduled Tribes local self-government and a high degree of autonomy in the management of their day-to-day affairs, control over natural resources, and other development activities in the areas where they live. Independent institutions such as National Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and National Commission for Minorities are effectively promoting and protecting the rights of these vulnerable groups. Further, National Minorities Development and Financial Corporation and National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) have been set up to
promote economic and development activities of minorities and Other Backward Classes.

India became seventh country to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. India had participated actively in the deliberations of the Ad-hoc Committee of the UN General Assembly on finalisation of a Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities. The enactment in India of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act in 1995 marked a significant step towards providing equal opportunities for people with disabilities and their full participation in the nation building. The Government had also set up National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities in 2001 and a National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation in 1997 to promote economic development activities, including self-employment programmes, for the benefit of persons with disabilities.¹⁴

**Struggle against Colonialism**

The purposes of the UN Charter include promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. This was by no means an easy quest. In 1945, when the UN Charter was signed, more
than 750 million people lived in colonies. A half century later, the number is only about 1.3 million. India was in the forefront of the struggle against colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination - a struggle that has transformed the lives of millions of people in Africa and Asia.

The Charter provisions on Non-Self Governing Territories were given a new thrust when the UN adopted the landmark 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. India was a co-sponsor of the Declaration. The Declaration solemnly proclaimed the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end, colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

The following year, the Special Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization was established to study, investigate and recommend action to bring an end to colonialism. India was elected the first Chairman of the Decolonization Committee. As a member of the Committee of 24, as it came to be called, India has ceaselessly struggled for an end to colonialism. India also took up the decolonization issue in the Trusteeship Committee, the Special Committee on Non-self Governing Territories and the Fourth Committee.15
India supported numerous resolutions in the UN fora on
decolonization. India has also raised the issue in NAM and
Commonwealth fora. For coming generations, colonialism may be a part
of history; new challenges of tomorrow have to be faced. However, it was
the struggle against colonialism, successfully waged in solidarity by the
Afro-Asian countries that has brought them to a stage where they can set
the goals of economic and social development for their societies.
Inference

Since the inception of UN, India supported the world organisation on various world issues, which have concerning to the whole mankind. India whole heartedly extended it support for the equal development of nations in the world. India as a peace loving country raised its voice against the accumulation of mass destruction weapons. Through out the cold war era India, made several attempts for the vertical as well as horizontal non-proliferation of nuclear haves and have nots. India actively took part in various international conferences on environment. India took active part in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it also advocated a holistic and integrated approach towards human rights. India extended its support to the UN to protect the rights under privileged sections of the society in the world which had gone a long way.
References


4. Ibid.


