

**Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative in the debate on “War, its Lessons and the Search for Permanent Peace”, at the United Nations Security Council on January 29, 2014**

**Mr. President,**

I would like to thank you and the delegation of Jordan for organizing this debate on “**War, its Lessons and the Search for a Permanent Peace,**” and for circulating the revised Concept Note for this debate. We have listened with interest to the views expressed by other delegations so far on this subject.

**Mr. President,**

2. The topic of our debate today has a direct relevance to the work of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security. It is useful to recall that in 1945, when the UN Charter was agreed to, the focus of our organization was on preventing the “scourge of war”, a direct reference to the destruction caused by the First and Second World Wars.

3. This year, when we commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War, my delegation would like to recall the fact that tens of thousands of Indian soldiers paid for the eventual victory of the Allied forces in both these Wars with their lives. India is committed to finding lasting solutions to the scourge of war, and was among the original founders of both the League of Nations in 1919, and the United Nations in 1945.

4. As we see it, the Concept Note for this debate deals with five broad issues.

**Mr. President,**

**International and internal conflicts**

5. On the first issue relating to international and internal conflicts, India’s position is that the mandate of the United Nations Security Council must keep focused on international conflict situations. As the single largest troop contributing country to UN Security Council mandated peacekeeping operations over the past six decades, having deployed more than 170,000 troops in 43 out of the 64 UN peacekeeping operations so far, our experience shows that robust international cooperation among the concerned member-states of the United Nations is the most sustainable method of addressing conflicts between member-states.

6. This would apply to the “robust mandate” given to a portion of the UN peacekeepers in the DRC, adopted by Security Council Resolution 2098 in March 2013,

and the UN peacekeeping response to the internal conflict in South Sudan contained in Security Council Resolution 2132, of December 2013. An internationally supported political process in these two operations would sustain efforts of more than 6000 Indian troops actively engaged in protecting the Security Council's mandate, including the protection of civilians.

**Mr. President,**

### **Reconciliation among ex-combatants**

7. On the second issue of forging deeper reconciliation among ex-combatants, it may be useful to look at the historical record in international relations. The most relevant one, for our debate today, is the evolution of the European Union since the end of the Second World War. Here is a case of ex-combatant governments coming together to create, with the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2010, a new political reality on a continent which had historically been fractured into "warring parties." There are similar practical examples in other parts of the world, where the strengths of individual nations formerly in conflict against each other are being voluntarily and collectively pooled to craft a new paradigm of constructive international cooperation, contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. This process of constructive cooperation based on dialogue is the biggest strength underpinning the United Nations system today.

**Mr. President,**

### **Analyzing wars**

8. The third issue of "reverse engineering" history, while conceptually an interesting one, is in our view a task best handled by distinguished academicians, including historians, rather than being entrusted to the inter-governmental structure at the United Nations. As we discover each passing day, there are many important facts related to historical narratives which have been, and indeed continue to be, suppressed from public dissemination by governments of member-states. The process of declassification of these historical records is subject to governmental rules and procedures, and not automatic. Even the documents which are declassified often are heavily redacted.

9. Therefore, "reverse engineering" historical narratives is dependent on an ideal situation which perhaps can never prevail in our imperfect world, namely, the full and unedited disclosure of facts. It is because of this important aspect that my delegation would caution against any proposal for the United Nations to re-examine historical narratives.

**Mr. President,**

**Sustainable Peace**

10. With regard to the fourth issue, that of sustainable peace, my delegation is of the view that the maintenance of international peace and security will become more sustainable if we agree to adopting a holistic and equitable approach to relations between member-states. The United Nations has an extensive agenda devoted to issues under the purview of the General Assembly, including on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. Sustainable development will play a crucial role in sustaining and contributing to international peace and security.

**Mr. President,**

**UN Historical Unit**

11. Fifthly, there is a proposal in the Concept Note for mandating a small UN Historical Advisory Team to assist in setting up national archives or historical commissions. As has been pointed out, this is indeed a sensitive issue. However, it is an important issue and perhaps the best place to make a beginning on formulating a way forward on such an idea would be the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. I suggest this because the work that any proposed United Nations Historical Unit would eventually have to do would need to be grounded on an approach based on the core principles of international law and the interpretation of documents. In our view such a concept should, therefore, be entrusted to our colleagues in the Sixth Committee, who, with their legal acumen and gravitas, would be best placed to deal with this concept in a sound and objective manner.

**Conclusion**

12. In conclusion, Mr. President, I come back to where we began, which is the role of the United Nations Security Council in maintaining international peace and security on a sustainable basis, so that the world is indeed prevented from the “scourge of war”.

**Mr. President,**

13. In our view, the most important challenge to international peace and security and conflict prevention as far as the United Nations is concerned is not the understanding of the historical process but a realization that our platform for global governance in this area, namely the Security Council, is no longer reflective of contemporary reality. The Security Council requires comprehensive reform in the membership of the Council, with expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories. This is essential both for its credibility and for continued confidence of the international community in the institution.

**Thank you, Mr. President.**

**BACK TO SECURITY COUNCIL**