

Speech for the use of the Leader of the Delegation at the General Debate on 'Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting Humanitarian action in times of Crisis' at the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to be held in Geneva from 19 to 23 October 2025

Hon'ble President, Distinguished Delegates; and Ladies & Gentlemen:

- Humanitarian principles, as you all know, form the very foundation of our shared humanity and human civilisation.
- I would like to start with a couplet of Sanskrit verse (sloka)

परोपकाराय फलन्ति वृक्षाः

परोपकाराय वहन्ति नद्यः ।

परोपकाराय दुहन्ति गावः

परोपकारार्थं मिदं शरीरम् ॥

Meaning – “Trees bear fruit for the benefit of others; rivers flow for the benefit of others; cows milk for the benefit of others; this body is also meant for the service of others.”

- This verse speaks volumes of the spiritual richness of Indian philosophy that guides the mankind to work for the welfare and upliftment of others.

Distinguished Delegates,

- Today, we are witnessing an alarming rise in conflicts, crises, and disasters, each devastating millions world-wide. At a time when unity and collective action are crucial, global humanitarian efforts face serious challenges.
- International humanitarian assistance is declining, multilateralism is in crisis, and growing mistrust in international institutions is further weakening the global response to major humanitarian needs.
- In these trying times, India provides a hope for the world. India's approach to humanitarian action is shaped by its civilizational ethos, strategic interests, and evolving global role.
- While India supports humanitarian norms and assistance, it does so through a lens of non-interference, pluralism, and regional stability.
- The ancient ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – the World is One Family, has been the guiding light of the India's humanitarian efforts.

Distinguished Delegates,

- India has always upheld humanitarian principles. We ratified the Geneva Conventions in 1950.
- As a strong votary of multilateralism, India has been a founding member of the UN, ILO, NAM, and G77 and many other multilateral institutions. A champion of decolonisation, India has stood against apartheid, and today we are raising the voice of the Global South.
- India strongly advocates for comprehensive reform of multilateral institutions. As the largest working democracy of the world, India believes global decision-making must be more inclusive and representative.
- Acknowledging the increasing shortfall in humanitarian funding, we urge the governments, international agencies, corporates and other stakeholders to enhance their support to the UN humanitarian assistance system.
- India also calls for greater global cooperation to save lives and provide safe, sustained and timely supply of essential humanitarian assistance to those affected by disasters and conflicts.

- India has significantly contributed to 49 of 71 UN peacekeeping missions, with over 200,000 personnel serving worldwide—making us one of the largest troop contributors. In 2007, we proudly deployed the first all-women peacekeeping contingent.
- Our Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, offers over 12,000 scholarships annually to professionals of developing countries, covering 300+ courses across 120 premier institutions in India.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, under the Vaccine Maitri programme, India supplied over 301 million vaccine doses to 100+ countries, gifting more than 15 million doses. Our Aarogya Maitri initiative continues to provide essential medicines to nations in crisis.
- India has emerged as a first responder in global crises. In the past five years, India has extended humanitarian aid to over 150 countries. These operations reflect our ethos of Service Before Self.
- Domestically, India has built a robust disaster management framework through the Disaster Management Act of 2005.

- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), with 16,000+ trained personnel, has saved over 1.59 lakh **(159 thousands)** lives and evacuated more than 8.6 lakh **(860 thousands)** individuals from disaster stricken areas both within and outside the country. Our disaster response is backed by strong financing mechanisms which include the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), the State Disaster Risk Management Fund (SDRMF), the PM CARES Fund, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions and initiatives by NGOs.
- While India believes that the primary responsibility to aid lies with national governments, we firmly uphold the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence in responding to all humanitarian situations.
- Fellow Parliamentarians, every human being deserves a life of dignity. Let us rise above divisions and recommit ourselves to the service of humanity. Let us pledge to uplift the distressed and stand by those in need.

Thank you.