

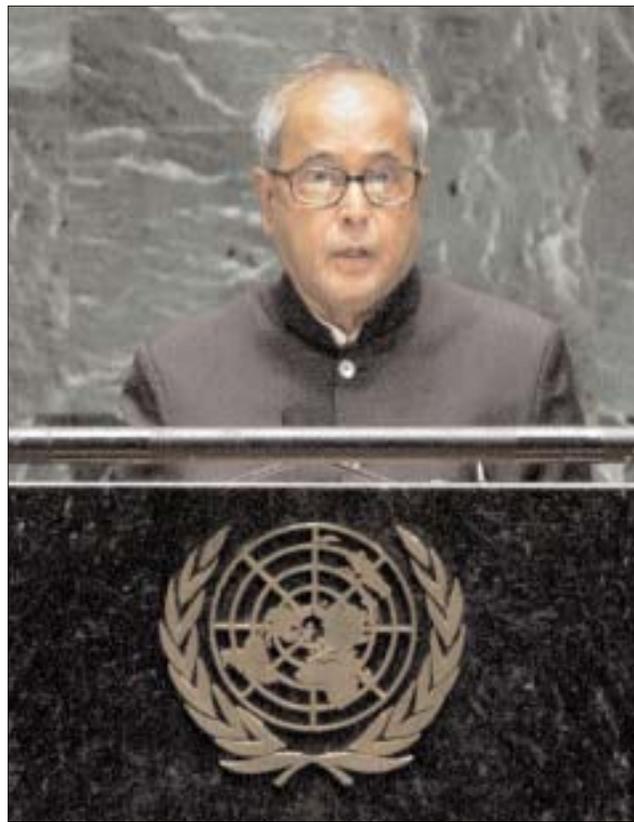
India seeks comprehensive reform of the U.N.

India has called for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations to address the challenges posed by the globalisation of threats and the limitations of the current international systems. "We need to enfranchise the U.N. to meet the challenges of our time by reinforcing its role and authority as the core of real multilateralism," said Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee during the General Debate of the 61st U.N. General Assembly.

"The discontents of globalisation would only deepen without a reform of multilateral bodies overseeing security, trade, financial flows and development to build an effective and equitable global partnership," he said during his address to the session on September 27.

This is an imperative even for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, he said, suggesting that the U.N. be also given a role in providing direction to the comprehensive reform of the international financial and trading systems.

Seeking similar reforms in the architecture of the international security system, Mukherjee said both permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council should be expanded to reflect the changed international environment. The Security Council has not only to be more representative but also more effective if it is to be able to satisfactorily perform the role mandated to it by the Charter.



Pranab Mukherjee addressing the 61st UNGA session on September 27.

The General Assembly too needs to be revitalised so that it may effectively address topics such as international law and human rights, financial, budgetary and administrative matters, as well as the global economic architecture and important issues related to development, Minister Mukherjee said in his address.

Describing the problem of terrorism as one of the most crucial issues facing nations in the modern era, he said while this phenomenon had become increasingly global, the world's collective response to it has remained rather inadequate.

The international community must signal that it will no longer tolerate the actions of the sponsors and abettors of terrorism or of those who willfully fail to prevent terrorists from utilising their territories, he said.

While India has gone along with the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy for now, member-nations must work together to finalise and adopt the Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism during the current session itself, the Minister said.

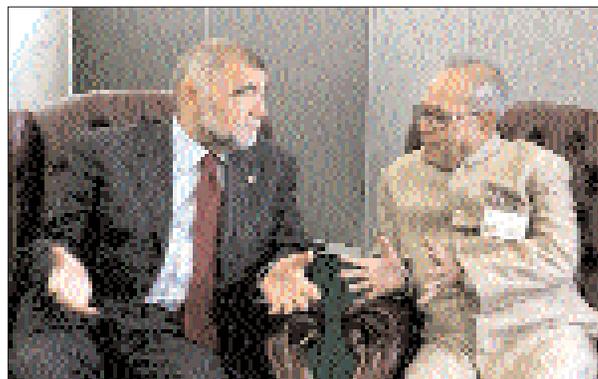
Referring to the threat posed by the existence of nuclear weapon and emergence of new dangers posed by the link of proliferation of WMD related materials and technologies to non-state actors and terrorist groups, Mukherjee said India will be presenting a working paper on nuclear disarmament.

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India offers to share expertise with G-77

India has reiterated its full support to the Group of 77 developing countries' efforts to find cooperative solutions, offering to share its expertise in all areas, including science and technology. This was stated by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee while speaking at the 13th Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 in New York on September 22. India also supported the Economic and Social Council playing its due role in promoting awareness and giving policy guidelines in the area of development cooperation. The central question is one of political will in allowing ECOSOC to discharge its responsibility, he said.

■ On the Sidelines



Photos, from left: Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, with President of Croatia Stjepan Mesic and President of the 61st UNGA Sheikhya Haya Rashed.

