

Remarks by PR of India on assuming G77 Chair – 20 January, 2026, Vienna

*Excellencies, fellow Ambassadors and Representatives of G77 countries,
Permanent Representatives from other Missions,
Heads of Vienna-Based Organisations, ladies and gentlemen,*

A warm Indian ‘Namaste’ on this cold Vienna afternoon to all of you!

It is an honour for me, on behalf of India, to assume the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 Vienna Chapter. I thank all Member countries of the G77 for your support, and look forward to working closely with each one of you in the coming year.

Let me also record our sincere appreciation to Kenya as the outgoing Chair, especially to my good friend former Ambassador Maurice Makoloo, for the dynamic stewardship of the G77 in 2025.

I also thank the Heads of the Vienna-based organisations, in particular Director General of UNIDO Mr Gerd Müller for UNIDO’s continued support for the work of the G77 Vienna Chapter.

Excellencies,

Ancient Indian scriptures, written thousands of years ago, speak about *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – meaning ‘the world is one family’. Interconnectedness, indeed the underlying oneness among all living beings and the natural world is a powerful reality that generates empathy, compassion, and harmony.

For India, therefore, multilateralism is not a choice but a necessity. At the same time, we fully recognise the need for reformed multilateralism, and for international institutions to be credible, inclusive and results-oriented.

What is especially needed is a multilateralism that meets the aspirations of all members of the global community, in particular the less-developed and smaller countries. This to me remains the underlying principle behind the Group of 77.

We are platform that seeks to provide a unified voice for developing countries within the United Nations. A body that promotes the collective interests of the developing world so as to ensure greater fairness and equity in international systems and structures. The G77 is also a leading framework for South-South cooperation.

Friends,

The imperatives of equity and inclusiveness, however, cannot be mere slogans. These objectives have to be achieved in today's operational context. To my mind, this requires pragmatism and acknowledging competing interests, even as we strive to achieve outcomes that benefit the members of the G77.

We live in an era when fundamental questions are being raised about the effectiveness of multilateral structures and processes, even the future of multilateralism. At the same time, our countries and the destinies of our people are increasingly interconnected. Indeed the many common challenges that we face not just transcend borders, they require more, and not less, multilateral cooperation.

Above all, let us not allow this current phase of confusion to become a period of confrontation. Let us recognise that for the ship of multilateralism to successfully sail through these stormy seas, we need everyone on board, and working together.

Last year, we witnessed last minute wrangling for consensus on resolutions, and sometimes we did not succeed. This means that we need to work together, both within the Group and beyond to improve working methods and communication.

As G77, let us commit to an approach based on dialogue and pragmatism, and one that is result-oriented. Process cannot overshadow purpose or procedures to prevail over results. The credibility and effectiveness of our multilateral work depends on this.

To the leadership and all those who work in the Secretariats of the Vienna-Based Organisations (VBOs), we see you as partners. Indeed, successful multilateralism is a shared responsibility of Member States and the VBOs.

We recognise that as organisations, you have to be responsive to those who finance your activities and projects. As a Group, G77 has always reiterated our concerns at the trend of growing extra-budgetary funding. Looking ahead, we hope to engage on how we can find a way to balance priorities of those offering funding with what we see as the ultimate objective of the VBOs from a G77 perspective, namely positive and tangible change, on the ground, in the developing world.

In other words, despite uncertainty in budgets, we would like to see technical cooperation, capacity building and creation of infrastructural facilities retain their primary importance in the work of the VBOs.

I also call upon the Heads of the Vienna-based organisations to decisively confront the long-standing issue of genuinely equitable geographical representation. If your work needs to align with the real needs and priorities of the developing world, suitable representation from the developing world in executive leadership positions has to be ensured.

Without singling out any organisation, let me give you an illustration. Currently, nearly 30% of D1 positions in the IAEA are held by only 3 European countries. If you were to add 2 North American countries, the representation of these 5 countries in IAEA D1 posts is as much as 50%. The situation in other VBOs may not be very different.

We in the G77 fully recognise the need for merit-based, gender-balanced, and role-appropriate qualifications in selection processes. However, even with these considerations, the imperative of geographically-balanced representation can be taken forward in a purposeful manner. We yet again request you to go beyond greater G77 presence in lower management positions with a similar share of impactful top management roles.

Also, issues of probity, ethics, and transparency have to be effectively addressed. This is true especially in the current climate where questions are being raised about possible wastefulness of expenditure. Efficient and digitally enabled management systems, cost-effective procurements, and rigorous budgeting discipline are necessary for all successful organisations. I am confident that the member states of the G77 will be happy to collaborate with the leadership of the VBOs and fully support your efforts in this direction.

Friends,

Let me conclude on an optimistic note. One of the fortunate aspects of our work in Vienna is the fact that the agenda of the VBOs focus largely on matters with a strong technical orientation. From atomic energy to space, and from industrial development to countering narcotics, scientific and technical inputs significantly inform our discussions here. To my mind, this offers us a unique opportunity to find outcomes based on objective criteria, and to go beyond the raging political contestations of the day.

To all member states of the G77, let us build a cohesive and purposeful Group that recognises political differences, but still leaves room for pragmatic solutions. This would be the best way to reaffirm our belief and conviction in the value of multilateralism.

Friends, I thank you once again for choosing India to Chair the G77 in Vienna at this important juncture. We are celebrating nearly 6 decades of the G77, 7 decades of the IAEA, and 8 decades of the United Nations. Let these milestones inspire us work together in the spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and shared purpose.

Lastly, in the spirit of Vienna's ball season and to mark India's Chairmanship of G77, the Permanent Mission of India invites all of you to join us in a traditional Garba dance celebration on Friday 30 January 2026 at the VIC Rotunda. Let us start the New Year with some groovy vibes and good food! Thank you.