

India cautions against securitisation of environmental issues

written by iasexam.com | 18/09/2020



India at the UN on Thursday cautioned against “securitisation” of environmental issues, saying linking up everything related to environmental degradation to peace and security does nothing to address climate concerns meaningfully nor does it ensure that real perpetrators adhere to their commitments on environmental issues.

Environmental degradation can have humanitarian impact or effect just as many other aspects of human activity have humanitarian dimensions, India said in a statement to the UN Security Council’s high-level open debate on maintenance of international peace and security: Humanitarian Effects of Environmental Degradation and Peace and Security.

Key Highlights

- India said that in many cases, perpetrators of environmental degradation may well be “outside national boundaries” while the people suffering are inside.
- India said there has been an increasing tendency both in the Security Council and outside to start discussing environmental issues with a certain “disregard” for the various important principles which govern environmental discussions, including climate change and biological diversity.
- Principles such as common but differentiated responsibilities are sacrosanct in this matter, it said.
- India cautioned that “steering away from these principles and other commitments and attempting to discuss such issues by obfuscating those responsible for addressing

them will only do a disservice to the real issue rather than making it more meaningful to address them.

- It also said that there is a need for a collective will to address such important issues multi-dimensionally without shirking commitments under important conventions such as the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Paris Agreement.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has consistently said that big emitters such as the US, China, the European Union, Japan, Russia and India must commit to carbon neutrality in 2050.
- He had also called on India and other G20 countries to invest in a clean, sustainable transition, particularly as they recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June launched the auction process for 41 coal blocks for commercial mining, a move that opened India's coal sector for private players, and had termed it a major step in the direction of India achieving self-reliance.
- Guterres has voiced concern over countries doubling down on domestic coal and opening up coal auctions, saying this strategy will only lead to further economic contraction and damaging health consequences.
- At the UNSC debate, India noted that there is a need for greater sensitivity in connection with the energy mix of various countries many of which are not of their choosing.
- Highlighting its role as the leading contributor to 'climate action', India said over the past few years, the country has reduced 38 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually.
- In the course of the last decade, around three million hectares of forest and tree cover has been added, which has enhanced the combined forest and tree cover to 24.56 per cent of the total geographical area of the country, it said.
- Going forward, India aims to restore 26 million hectares of degraded and deforested land and achieve land-degradation neutrality by 2030.

SOURCE: *Hindustan Times*