Thank you, Excellency.

First of all, I would like to congratulate His Excellency President Juan Santos on presiding over the Security Council’s Open Debate today. It is a matter of great satisfaction that Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and UN’s Special Envoy President Clinton as also President Garcia Preval of Haiti, the Foreign Minister of Colombia, the Vice Minister of Brazil and the Minister of State of UK are in our midst today. We appreciate their taking time off to address us on the situation in Haiti. Their participation in today’s debate underlines their commitment to the cause of Haiti. We have benefited a great deal from their views.

2. Mr President, the Security Council along with the other organs of the UN system has continued to pay attention to the situation in Haiti by regular meetings and, in this context, we are glad that the Colombian Presidency of the Council has organized today’s Open Debate. We hope that sustained engagement of the international community and this Council in developments in Haiti will reassure not only the people and government of Haiti but also bring about greater coherence in the efforts of multilateral agencies and bilateral partners in the assistance of the Haitian authorities.

3. Mr. President, we all know well the extent of devastation that was caused in Haiti by the earthquake, which took the lives of some 300,000 and injured an equal number. While Haiti was still battling to overcome this disaster, an outbreak of cholera epidemic further aggravated an already grim situation. Amidst all this, the country plunged into a political crisis with a series of electoral disputes in Presidential and Legislative elections. Return of erstwhile Haitian leaders from exile seems to add to political tension.

4. This year too Haiti will face testing times with change in government and challenge of sustaining the recovery efforts. It is a matter of satisfaction that preliminary results of re-election held last month have been announced and Mr
Michel Martelly declared the winner. It is our hope that the final result of the presidential run-off would be announced soon and all political actors in Haiti will accept the result. In this connection, we note with appreciation the role played by regional organizations, particularly the Organization of American States (OAS) in resolving the electoral disputes in the first phase of presidential elections.

5. It is critical that the transition of power is smooth. We also hope the political leadership in Haiti will show maturity at this difficult time and live up to the expectations of their people.

6. Mr. President, Haiti requires continued and sustained support of the international community in its national efforts towards long-term recovery, reconstruction and development. With nearly 680,000 persons still living in camps, millions living in extremely difficult conditions, lack of access to clean water, sanitation and other basic services, the need of the hour is not only solidarity and commitment but also acceleration of the pace of reconstruction efforts. Simultaneously, it is also necessary to focus on governmental reforms towards good governance, rule of law and institution building in a process owned and led by Haiti.

7. Better coordination between aid agencies and donors with the Government of Haiti requires no emphasis. This would not only avoid duplication but also direct the aid to sectors considered most necessary by the Haitian government and people. The various UN agencies also have to work hard towards improving Haiti’s technical capacity to fully and properly utilize the aid.

8. Mr. President, India has made a modest contribution to the efforts of the Haitian authorities to deal with the situation there. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, India made a cash contribution of US$ 5 million to the Government of Haiti towards relief measures as a token of our solidarity with the people of Haiti. India also contributed US$ 500,000 to Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) that was put to good use in the earliest stages of recovery work in Haiti. We have also pledged to reconstruct one of the Government ministries to be identified by the Government of Haiti and we are awaiting an indication as to which building we should prepare to construct.

9. In recognizing the need to provide basic amenities – shelter, drinking water and sanitation to the Haitian people, we have joined Brazil and South Africa in expanding our IBSA, the India-Brazil-South Africa, Trust Fund’s waste management project in Haiti, both in its area of coverage and scope of handling different types of waste. IBSA is spending over US$ 2 million in this effort and for reconstruction of a community health centre in Haiti.

10. Mr. President, we highly commend and support the role played by MINUSTAH peacekeepers in the humanitarian and recovery efforts in aid of the local authorities in Haiti. We are proud of their sterling efforts, both on its civil
side as well as the military and police side, in the immediate aftermath of the disastrous earthquake, despite the tremendous losses that they themselves suffered. We are also happy to note the important role played by MINUSTAH in ensuring peaceful run-off of elections in March 2011. I also recall the contributions made by the Indian police officers deployed with MINUSTAH, presently numbering 470 in three contingents, two of which were deployed by India after the earthquake at the request of the United Nations.

11. We hope, Mr. President, that this year Haiti with support from the international community will not only recover faster from the effects of last year’s disasters, but also show its political resilience to achieve much needed reforms to improve the living conditions of the Haitian population. India is committed to our collective efforts in achieving these goals.

    Thank you, Mr. President.

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