Thank you very much Mr. President for giving me this opportunity.

Let me at the outset, express my delegation’s appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for this useful interaction.

The briefing provided on the progress till date on the World Development Report 2011 highlights the inter-linkages between “conflict, security and development.” This opportunity for interaction between member-states and the World Bank, coming as it has in the midst of the on-going review of the Peacebuilding Commission, is particularly welcome.

I have had the privilege of interacting with two of the panelists some time back at a weekend retreat. I am, therefore, aware of the high quality of their presentation. The other two panelists have also contributed immensely to the rich discussions today.

Having paid compliments, we need to have a reality check regarding the issues at hand. There a few stark facts that stare us in the face. All countries except Haiti on the Peacebuilding Commission’s agenda are in Africa. And the continent of Africa, in spite of all the lofty pronouncements of the international community, continues to face endemic problems.

The mandates of the various bodies that make up the global governance architecture were devised sixty years ago. There are many of us who believe that unless this architecture is changed to reflect current realities, the contributions that these bodies can make will be somewhat limited.

In the context of the World Bank, we cannot think of any other way for its useful contribution to global issues other than by focusing on the issue of poverty alleviation which lies at the core of problems in Africa. Along with poverty alleviation, the other
requiring the Bank’s attention is youth unemployment. This is particularly relevant as we are dealing with fragile states that have the potential of lapsing back to conflict unless adequate steps are taken to address the immediate challenges at hand.

Several interventions before me, including that by the Permanent Representative of Ireland referred to the nature of interaction between the UN and the World Bank. In my view, nice exchanges of pleasantries, documents, analysis by themselves will not take us very far. We need to see where resources that would benefit these countries can be mobilized. We see that in similar discussions, there is fatigue and ennui in Africa about the UN’s role. Why is it so? Is it because the development quotient or development dividend has not been forthcoming in the UN’s activities there?

Now I would like to move to my speaking notes.

The issues of conflict prevention in a globalised world do not merely cover situations wherein we have a repressive states and helpless individuals. We have conflicts created by the result of the acquisition of war-fighting capabilities and techniques by non-state actors.

Let us be clear, that when countries are confronted with such challenges, the international community should be able to provide the necessary resources to enable them to deal with the situation. I have repeatedly stressed the imperative of national ownership. Even in cases where it is difficult to locate national ownership, international peacebuilding efforts should be geared towards strengthening the capacity of a post-conflict State to govern effectively and to govern well. Creating economic opportunities and capacity building needs to be flagged.

We need to constantly improve the governance structures of the peacebuilding architecture. Such improvements must primarily seek to ensure that all the available resources that are geared towards peacebuilding in post-conflict situations are properly harnessed in the shortest possible time. This we believe is the sine qua non of peacebuilding. In this regard, we welcome the role that the World Bank has been playing and call for its continued association with the Peacebuilding Commission.

I would like to touch briefly on Afghanistan which is one of the countries that you are dealing with in your study. India has remained committed to assisting Afghanistan in its development efforts in accordance with the wishes and priorities of the people of Afghanistan. India’s development partnership with Afghanistan, currently to the tune of more than US$ 1.3 billion, is focused on the areas of infrastructure development, human resource development and capacity building, food assistance and small development projects that bring immediate benefit to the people at the grass-roots level. Bilateral cooperation apart, India is also actively partnering with the UNDP, especially in capacity building for the Afghan public service as well as for building of national institutions.
In the case of Haiti, soon after the devastating earthquake, India announced a cash contribution of US $ 5 million towards relief measures as a token of solidarity with the people of Haiti and transferred the entire amount to the Government of Haiti on 2 February, 2010. Moreover, in response to a request for additional peacekeepers following adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1908 in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, India is sending two additional Formed Police Units to Haiti to strengthen MINUSTAH. We have also joined Brazil and South Africa in deciding to expand our IBSA, the India-Brazil-South Africa Trust Fund, waste management project in Haiti, both in its area of coverage and its scope of handling different types of waste. IBSA plans to spend over US$ 2 million in this effort and for reconstruction of a community health centre in Haiti this year.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that India would be very happy to continue to make available our capabilities in nation building to countries in post-conflict situations and cooperate with the United Nations in its peacebuilding activities.