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PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT ON NATIONAL
SECURITY COUNCIL

New Delhi : Bhadra 02, 1912
August 24, 1990

The following is the text of the Suo moto statement made by the Prime Minister, Shri Vishwanath Pratap Singh here today in Parliament on the constitution of the National Security Council:-

"The Government had announced their intention to set up a National Security Council to consider all aspects of national security in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. The council will take a holistic view of national security issues in the light of the external, economic, political and military situations and their linkages with our domestic concerns and objectives.

The need for a holistic approach is especially important today, as both the external geo-strategic environment and the internal situation in the country are changing rapidly. The international environment has undergone dramatic changes which will inevitably lead to the establishment of new equilibria of power in different regions of the globe. Economic considerations are increasingly determining international political dynamics, and economic power is now more significant than military strength. The domestic situation is also changing as the process of development releases new energies and raises aspirations which, in many regions, have strained the social fabric and the administrative structure. In some parts of the country, these strains are compounded by external forces aiding and abetting militant and terrorist groups in their unlawful and subversive activities. These trends, if allowed to go unchecked, could undermine the nation's

The Government have, therefore, decided to set up a National Security Council comprising the following:

Prime Minister.....Chairman
Minister of Defence... ..Member
Minister of Finance..... Member
Minister of Home Affairs ...Member
Minister of External Affairs.Member

The council may, as necessary, request other Union Ministers and any Chief Minister of a State to attend meetings of the council. The Council may also invite experts and specialists to attend its meetings as necessary.

The main endeavour of the National Security Council will be to evolve an integrated approach to policy-making as it affects national security, taking account of the linkages between the evolving external situation in the political, military and economic fields and our domestic situation. This should lead to the identification of strategies which optimise our efforts in defence, internal security, and foreign affairs. The Council will ensure that medium-term and long-term assessments are made of the internal and geo-strategic environment to serve as a perspective for shaping Government policy in related matters. The subjects submitted for the consideration of the council will broadly cover the following:

- (a) external threats scenario;
- (b) strategic defence policies;
- (c) other security threats, specially those involving atomic energy, space and high technology.
- (d) internal security covering aspects such as counter- insurgency, counter-terrorism and counter - intelligence;

- (e) patterns of alienation likely to emerge within the country, especially those with a social communal or regional dimension;
- (f) security implication of evolving trends in the world economy on India's economic and foreign policies;
- (g) external economic threats in areas such as energy, commerce, food and finance;
- (h) threats posed by trans-border crimes such as smuggling and traffic in arms, drugs and narcotics;
- (i) evolving a national consensus on strategic and security issues.

The National Security Council shall be assisted by a Strategic Core Group comprising the Cabinet Secretary as Chairman and representatives of the three Services and the Ministries concerned. The Strategic Core Group will supervise the submission of appropriate studies, papers and reports to the National Security Council from the Ministries or other agencies of the Government, or from Special Task Forces.

The National Security Council will have a separate Secretariat which will be headed by a Secretary who will be an officer in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India. This Secretariat will also service the Strategic Core Group.

For in-depth study of different aspects concerning national security, Task Forces may be established as may be decided by the Chairman of the Council. Each Task Force will be concerned with

specific areas of security and its membership will be drawn from the Ministries and agencies dealing with the security issues within the Government. Each Task Force will be headed by an experienced person well-versed in matters assigned to that Task Force. While the Task Forces will be administratively attached to the Secretariat of the National Security Council, they may request for expert assistance from agencies within or outside the Government.

The National Security Council will also oversee efforts to increase public awareness on important national security problems with a view to promoting the widest possible consensus within the country on issues affecting the nation's security. Towards this end, a National Security Advisory Board will be constituted comprising members from among Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament, academics, scientists and persons having rich experiences of service in the administration, armed forces, press and the media. The Board will meet at least twice a year and keep a record of its proceedings. The Board will essentially serve as a mechanism for obtaining a broad range of informed views and options on national security issues. This will form an important input into studies and papers submitted for the consideration of the National Security Council. The Board will be serviced by the Secretariat of the National Security Council.

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