

India votes against UN draft resolution on climate change

It opposes move seeking to shift talks from UNFCCC to Security Council

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India on Monday voted against a draft resolution at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) linking climate to security, saying it was an attempt to shift climate talks from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to the Security Council and a “step backward” for collective action on the issue.

The resolution was sponsored by Ireland and Niger, and it did not pass, with 12 UNSC members voting for it, India and Russia voting against it and China abstaining.

Niger, which holds the UNSC presidency for December, organised a debate on December 9 titled ‘Maintenance of international peace and security: security in the context of terrorism and climate change.’

One of the objectives of the debate was to examine how terrorism and security risks could be linked to climate change, as per a concept note circulated by Niger.



Voicing dissent: Russian Ambassador raising his hand to veto the UN Security Council resolution on Monday. • AP

“What is it that we can collectively do under this draft resolution that we cannot achieve under the UNFCCC process?” India’s Permanent Representative and Ambassador to the U.N. T.S. Tirumurti said, positing that the reason countries were attempting to bring climate talks to the Security Council was that decisions could be taken without consensus or the involvement of most developing countries.

A video of Mr. Tirumurti explaining India’s vote was posted by official Indian handles on Twitter.

“If the Security Council indeed takes over the responsibility on this issue, a few

states will then have a free hand in deciding on all climate-related issues. This is clearly neither desirable nor acceptable,” he said.

Undermining progress

The draft resolution, as per the ambassador, would undermine progress made at Glasgow, where the latest round of talks under the UNFCCC, the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), concluded in November.

Developing and ‘least developed’ countries had worked, over the last two decades, to make “common but differentiated” responsibilities a fundamental tenet of climate action, Mr. Tiru-

murti noted.

“Today’s attempt to link climate with security really seeks to obfuscate lack of progress on critical issues under the UNFCCC process,” Mr. Tirumurti said, adding that many of the UNSC members were the primary contributors to climate change.

He said developed countries had not met their promises with regard to climate action and called for these countries to provide \$1 trillion in climate finance “at the earliest.”

Mr. Tirumurti said the attempt to discuss climate action and climate justice issues at the UNSC was “motivated by a desire to evade responsibility in the appropriate forum.”

He said that climate change may have exacerbated conflicts in the Sahel region and across Africa, and India remained committed to peace and development in those regions, but “viewing conflicts through the prism of climate change” was “misleading” and an oversimplification that could worsen conflicts rather than resolving them.