UN Statement on Pulwama Terror Attack

Why in news?

The UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted a 'statement' on February 21 condemning the Pulwama terrorist attack.

What was the February 21 statement?

- The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) strongly condemned the Pulwama terror attack.
- The Council mentioned the name of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terror group in the statement.
- It emphasized the need to hold the perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice.
- Reportedly, China made attempts to stall the statement for its reference to Jaish e Mohammed (JeM).
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- However China too finally went with the statement.

What are the different actions that the UNSC can take?

- **Addressing the media** - The least forceful action the Council can take is to authorise the current President to speak to media representatives about the proceedings of the Council.
- There is no official record of these remarks.
- **Statement** - The second level is when the Council adopts a presidential statement.
- A lot of negotiations are undertaken as informal consultations in a Council chamber where only members of the Council are present.
- Of necessity, it has to be a 'consensus' document, and not a 'unanimous' one.
- This means that not all the members support everything included in it but go along since they do not have a serious problem with the text.
- Even if one member has strong objections to the text, the statement cannot be approved.
- The draft of the text could be prepared either by the President or by one of the members who, in most cases, is the representative of one of the permanent members.
- Also, the statement could be issued either in the name of the Council or in

the name of ‘members of the Security Council’.
- The former is generally regarded as carrying more weight than the latter.
- **Resolution** - The third level is the resolution, which is the most authentic voice of the Council, carrying maximum weight.
- Again, the resolution can be under Chapter VI or Chapter VII of the UN Charter.
- Resolutions adopted under Chapter VII are enforceable unlike those under Chapter VI (Resolutions regarding Kashmir are under Chapter VI).

What effect do these have?

- In practice, the country against which the resolution or statement is aimed cares a lot about the contents in it.
- This is because countries care about their image in the international community.
- E.g. Israel has the maximum number of resolutions critical of its actions.
- It makes tough efforts, through its protector, the U.S., to have the resolutions moderated to make them less critical.
- Notably, hours of time are spent on negotiations, discussing whether to ‘condemn’, ‘deplore’ or ‘strongly deplore’ something.

How significant is the February 21 statement?

- The UN Security Council has only adopted a presidential 'statement' on Pulwama attack and not a 'resolution' as is reported by some.
- The statement was in the name of the members of the Council.
- Though not ineffective, it is relatively lower in state than a statement that is issued in the name of the Council.
- A statement in the name of the members might also suggest that not all of them were in full agreement with the entire text.
- The fact that China went along with the statement does not signify much of a shift in its position.
- It's because, the Council had already declared the JeM as a terrorist organisation.
- The statement does not name JeM chief Masood Azhar whom India wants to list as a “global terrorist” at the UNSC.
- With these proper perspectives, India should take further its fight against terrorism, at the United Nations Security Council.

Source: The Hindu



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