

Statement - Plenary Session of the Second World Summit for Social Development

Venue: Qatar National Convention Centre, Gharafat Al Rayyan

04th November 2025, 09:00 AM to 01:00 PM

(Word Count – 810)

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, and Colleagues,

It is my honour to represent India at this august forum.

30 years ago the Copenhagen Declaration placed people at the centre of development, with a focus on **poverty alleviation, full employment and decent work, and social inclusion**. India's approach towards economic growth and social progress resonates with this declaration.

India's development story is one of transformation at scale. In the last 10 years, through **persistent reforms, convergence of welfare programmes, and digital innovation**,

approximately 250 million Indians have been lifted out of multidimensional poverty.

Excellencies,

India's journey is guided by the profound philosophy of ***Antyodaya***, meaning, empowering the very last person in the line. Our **progress is a result of a lifecycle-based framework** where a **child receives a healthy foundation**, a **young adult finds support for education and livelihood**, a **worker gets decent work**, and an **elderly is guaranteed dignity and income security** in old age.

Today, **118 million schoolchildren** receive nutritious **mid-day meals**, over **800 million citizens** have been provided with **food security**. **Health security** has been provided to **425 million Indians** and over **37 million houses** have been provided to those with low income.

Between 2017–18 and 2023–24, our **unemployment rate has declined from 6% to 3.2%** and **women's employment rate has nearly doubled**. Millions of women have

been mobilised into **Self Help Groups**. Credit disbursements have supplemented the strength of these women-led local institutions.

India's **social security coverage has increased** from **19% in 2015 to 64.3% in 2025**. Recognizing our efforts, the International Social Security Association has conferred India with the "**ISSA Award for Outstanding Achievement in Social Security**" this year.

Central to our efforts is the focus on seamless delivery of these programmes. Through a network of **bank accounts, mobile internet ownership and unique citizen IDs**, we have ensured **efficient last mile delivery** through **Direct Benefit Transfer**.

Excellencies,

The **Political Declaration** we are adopting in this summit resonates with the global priorities, especially recognition of **women-led development, traditional medicine**

systems, digital public infrastructure, and cooperatives, as engines for inclusive growth.

Our **economic growth and social development pathways are aligned with the sustainable development goals** and our commitments regarding **climate change**. We remain steadfast on **the 17 Sustainable Development Goals** agenda of the UN.

We take **strong objection** to certain unjustified references made by Pakistan yesterday on India in its remarks.

This is an **abuse of an international** forum to distract the world from focusing on social development by peddling disinformation against India. We wish to set the record straight.

On the Indus Waters Treaty, Pakistan has undermined its spirit through **sustained hostility and cross-border terrorism**. It has also repeatedly misused the Treaty mechanisms to obstruct India's legitimate projects.

As regards the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, **Pakistan has no locus standi to comment on India's internal affairs**. This is particularly so when it indulges in acts of cross-border terrorism against the citizens of India.

Pakistan would do well to introspect and address its own serious challenges related to development which has made it dependent on hand-outs by international community. It should **stop abusing international forums**.

Excellencies,

Inspired by our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji's mantra of ***"SabkaSaath, Sabka Vikas"*** meaning *'Together we all, Development for all'*, we believe that **social progress is achievable when people remain at the core of policy, when innovation meets inclusion, and when development becomes a shared endeavour**.

It is also important that this forum recognizes and acknowledges the **distinct circumstances, economic needs, and social requirements of every country**.

India's development trajectory offers an **emulative development model** for the Global South. As we collectively chart the future course of social development, India stands ready to share its best practices and strengthen global partnerships.

I extend my appreciation to the United Nations and the government of Qatar, for organising this timely gathering that gives the global leadership a platform to renew their commitment for creating a socially just and inclusive world.

Thank you.