

Welcome Remarks

by

Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia

Director General, ICWA

at

Roundtable Discussion

on

**“National Security: The Key Challenges
Ahead for India”**

at

Sapru House, New Delhi

2nd December 2014

Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu, Hon'ble Minister of Railways,
Shri N.N.Vohra, Hon'ble Governor of Jammu & Kashmir,
Mr Raj Chengappa, Editor-in-Chief, The Tribune Group of Newspapers and our partner organization for this Roundtable,
Members of ICWA's Governing Council and Trustees of TheTribune,
Distinguished Panelists, Your Excellencies, Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,



(L-R) Mr Raj Chengappa, Ambassador Satish Chandra, Shri N.N. Vohra, Hon'ble Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, DG, ICWA, Shri S.S. Sodhi, Shri Naresh Mohan and Shri S.S. Mehta.

It is my privilege to extend a warm welcome to you all. We feel particularly honoured by the presence of the Hon'ble Minister of Railways and the Hon'ble Governor of Jammu & Kashmir.

2. In Shri Suresh Prabhu, we have one of the most cerebral members of the Union Cabinet. Those of us who followed the recent G-20 Summit, would have noted his sterling contribution to the deliberations, their outcome and its projection from the Indian perspective. In Shri

N.N.Vohra, we have an exceptional public figure who has unrivaled expertise in security and governance issues. In short, we could not have hoped for a more potent panel for the Opening Session of this Round Table on “National Security: The Key Challenges Ahead for India.”

3. ICWA, the country’s oldest and leading foreign policy Think Tank, is pleased to serve as a platform for an in-depth dialogue on the chosen subject. This event is the result of our proactive collaboration with The Tribune Group of Newspapers. Our experience is that such collaborative ventures help in creating significant synergy, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of an event, if hosted by an institution individually.

4. Turning to the theme of the Round Table, I may be permitted to make a few brief observations.

5. Firstly, the country’s strategic community is largely agreed on the inextricable linkage between security and development. Without security, development is hardly possible; and without inclusive development, security could only be illusory. Hence, a holistic or comprehensive conception of national security is absolutely essential.

6. Secondly, while often in a discussion on security issues, scholars’ approach tends to be wide-ranging covering all domains of security and development, it is desirable not to lose our central focus. I would suggest that a realistic approach on national security may require us to make a distinction between core areas and secondary areas of national security. How do we define these areas and co-relate them with each other is an issue worthy of further reflection.

7. Thirdly, reference to a fundamental dilemma involved here may be made. National security, which, in the narrowest sense, pertains to defence, internal security, intelligence, counter-terrorism and diplomacy, etc, entails a certain degree of secrecy. So how can we discuss all these sensitive matters in public? The answer, I think, has to be that a balance would need to be struck because, in this age of democracy and social media – fuelled public opinion and awareness, there is an imperative need for public debate. The purpose of this Round Table is to initiate a process which results in the emergence of a consensual view of the nature and range of

challenges and the way out. This consensus should be shared with the policy maker. I am confident that this balanced focus will be kept in view throughout the day.



Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, DG, ICWA delivering Welcome Remarks.

8. In the end, let me, once again, reiterate ICWA's warm welcome to you all and express our happiness to see such a large number of distinguished figures assembled here at Sapru House today.

9. Thank you for your attention.
