**Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma,**

**Permanent Representative of India to the CD,**

**in the Informal Discussions on Agenda Items 5, 6 and 7**

**(June 25-26, 2014)**

Mr. Coordinator,

It is a pleasure to be participating in these informal structured discussions on Agenda Items 5,6 and 7 under your able coordinator ship. We congratulate you on assumption of this responsibility. We also convey our appreciation for the Radiological weapons working paper prepared by the Co-Chair and Vice Co-Chair of the Informal Working Group, which will be discussed under Agenda item 5. We would like to thank Ambassador Batsanov for a very useful overview of past efforts in the CD on the issue of Radiological Weapons.

2. Allow me now to set out briefly India’s positions on the three agenda items under discussion today.

3. **On Agenda Item 5**: The issue of radiological weapons has been on the agenda of the CD since 1979, following the General Assembly’s call in 1978 for concluding a Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. The issue was considered in Ad Hoc Working Groups during 1980-83 and in Ad Hoc committee’s between1984-1992. In recent years it has been part of discussions in the informal and formal meetings in the CD.

4. To increase international awareness on the need for concerted action against the threat posed by terrorists acquiring WMDs, India has been tabling a resolution entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction” in the General Assembly since 2002. The resolution is adopted by the UNGA by consensus and a large number of Member States cosponsor the resolution (At the 67th GA in 2013, the resolution attracted 77 co-sponsors). France tables the resolution “Preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive materials and sources” in the General Assembly, which we support.

5. A number of other measures have been taken by the international community to protect and secure nuclear and radiological materials. The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism requires State Parties to adopt measures to establish as criminals acts offences set forth in the Convention. The IAEA has taken steps to improve the regulatory framework for nuclear security. The Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material has been strengthened as also the Code of Conduct for Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. UN Security Council Resolution 1540, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and Nuclear Security Summit have also played an important role in this context.

We appreciate the Radiological Weapons working paper as a useful contribution setting out important issues. While for India nuclear disarmament continues to be the highest priority, should there be consensus on commencing substantive negotiations in the CD with a view to achieving one or more international instruments that would address the threat posed by new types of WMDs, including radiological weapons, we would not stand in the way. Our work should focus on radiological weapons specifically without duplication of work being done at the IAEA or other international forums. Two aspects of radiological weapons could be looked at: a Convention containing legal obligations to prevent States from developing, deploying or using such weapons; and an obligation to ensure that their nationals are prevented from making or using radiological weapons.

6**. On Agenda Item 6** i.e. “Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament”, we note that SSOD-I stressed that the implementation of priorities set by it should lead to general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which is the ultimate goal of all efforts exerted in the field of disarmament. We believe that the intent of this agenda item is to elaborate a programme which would place specific measures relating to disarmament into a carefully considered plan, setting out objectives, priorities and timeframes. The CD should evolve the main principles of a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament which are global, non-discriminatory and of universal acceptance. This would reinforce the role of the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and the central role and primary responsibility of the UN in the sphere of disarmament in accordance with its Charter. Agreement on a comprehensive programme of disarmament should not be a precondition for making progress on other agenda items, including on nuclear disarmament.

7. **On Agenda Item 7**, i.e. “Transparency in Armaments”, we believe that transparency is a necessary tool for confidence building and enhancing mutual trust among States. As with other CBMs, measures to promote transparency in armaments should be mutually agreed upon by all States; only then would it be able to secure the widest possible participation of States and contribute effectively to the process of confidence building. Measures to enhance transparency in armaments must also respect the inherent right of States to self-defense as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Such measures cannot restrict or prejudice the legitimate right of States to acquire or produce arms for self-defense and in pursuit of their foreign policy and national security interests.

8. With respect to transparency of WMD, those relating to biological and chemical weapons should be governed by the BWC and CWC respectively. Transparency with respect to nuclear weapons cannot be a free standing factor, but should form part of an agreed multilateral framework covering all states possessing nuclear weapons, consistent with their national security interests.

9. With respect to conventional weapons, India has supported the UN Register on Conventional Arms and has regularly submitted national reports to the Register. India has participated actively in the three-yearly reviews of the Register and supports efforts for further improving the Register along with efforts towards universalizing participation. India has also supported the resolution on objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditure. India also contributed to the work of the GGE on the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures held in 2011. India has submitted its national reports to the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the CCW and its Protocols.

Thank you.