

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, GENEVA - February 25, 2025

Madame President

It is an honour to address the High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament in 2025 under the Presidency of Japan.

The global order is not static and multilateral bodies must adapt if they are to remain relevant in changing international times.

In this context, let me at the outset, congratulate the collective Presidency of the Conference, and in particular, the first Presidency of 2025, that of Italy, for guiding the Conference towards consensus on a Decision on its work. It is noteworthy that the Conference was able to attain consensus in the midst of very challenging geopolitical circumstances. That the Conference has been successful, in 3 of the last 4 years, in agreeing on its work is a confirmation of the importance attached by its membership to multilateralism and to the work of multilateral disarmament and arms control. This validates the continuing importance and relevance of a body like the Conference on Disarmament in the global security architecture.

It also indicates that the Conference, and the Disarmament Machinery, combine a degree of resilience with the capacity to innovate.

India is committed to multilateralism and multilateral institutions and to the ideas of compromise and collective effort that underlie them.

Prime Minister Modi has said that this is not a time for war. India believes that the Conference's vocation, that of negotiating legally binding instruments in disarmament and arms control has a particular relevance to preventing and resolving conflict.

It is a fact that the Conference has not been able to conduct substantive negotiations on legally binding instruments for a quarter of a century. The reasons, procedural and substantive, for which it has been unable to do so are understood by all. That does not however detract from the importance of negotiation, of compromise, and of dialogue. They are more necessary than ever. India calls upon delegations to focus on convergences rather than divergences and on finding common ground through compromise.

Madame President

India attaches high priority to the CD as the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, as mandated by SSOD-1 and reaffirmed most recently in UNGA Resolution 79/71. India is committed to advancing the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament. We are encouraged that the Conference has established Subsidiary Bodies well in time for its work for the 2025 session. This will allow them to conduct in-depth exchanges.

Madame President

India is committed to the goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. We have, through our Working Paper CD/1816, submitted to the Conference in 2007, called for complete elimination of nuclear weapons through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework.

India reiterates its call to undertake the steps outlined in the Working Paper, including negotiation in the CD of a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention.

Madame President

Without diminishing the priority, we attach to disarmament, India supports the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. This remains the most suitable basis for negotiations.

India, as a responsible nuclear weapon State, is committed as per its nuclear doctrine to maintain credible minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States.

Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) is another long-standing item on the CD's agenda. India looks forward to an early start of negotiations of a legally binding instrument.

India has participated constructively in various processes on outer space security, including the two GGEs on Further Practical Measures on PAROS and OEWG on Reducing Space Threats. India voted in favour of UNGA Resolution 79/512, which has convened a new open-ended working group for the period 2024– 2028, to replace the two open-ended working groups established by resolutions 78/20 and 78/238.

We are also actively engaged with the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, established pursuant to the IX Review Conference of the BWC.

India has participated actively and constructively in the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, as it continues its work on “considering and formulating a set of elements of an instrument”

India accords high importance to advancing the work being undertaken on conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, in relevant platforms.

Emerging technologies have added new dimensions to warfare and military capacity. India acknowledges that the deployment of emerging technologies and the appearance of new domains of conflict raises serious questions. India is committed to addressing these challenges, be it in the Disarmament Commission, through the General Assembly, through treaty bodies affiliated to the Biological Weapons Convention and the CCW, and through other processes.

The Prime Minister of India, along with the President of France, recently co-chaired the AI Action Summit held in Paris. India will host the next AI Summit.

The impact of these technologies on international peace and security has been the focus of a First Committee resolution which India has traditionally moved and which was most recently adopted, as usual, by consensus as UNGA Resolution 79/23.

These technologies have enormous potential for good and for transforming developmental outcomes and improving the lives of people particularly for developing countries like mine. They should not be unnecessarily stigmatized.

Madame President

In line with the SSOD-1's emphasis on promoting expertise in disarmament and in empowering our younger generations, India hosts a fully funded three-week Annual Disarmament and International Security Fellowship programme covering an entire range of key disarmament and international security issues.

The 5th edition of the Annual Fellowship Programme was successfully held in New Delhi last month from January 13 to 31, bringing together young diplomats from 33 countries. I take this opportunity to thank the Under Secretary General and High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu for personally addressing the Fellows in New Delhi.

Thank you
