



INDIA भारत

Permanent Mission of India Conference on Disarmament

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 79th SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, OCTOBER 15, 2024

Madame Chairperson,

Let me begin by congratulating you and the members of the bureau on your being elected to lead this Committee's work. My delegation assures you of our fullest support and cooperation.

The Prime Minister of India in his remarks at the Summit of the Future noted that: *"Success of Humanity lies in our collective strength, not in the battlefield."* The work of the First Committee, and that of the Disarmament Machinery, has a particular relevance to the maintenance of international peace and security and in prevention of conflict. The current geopolitical situation therefore places a special demand on this Committee.

Madame Chairperson,

India is committed to multilateralism, to multilateral institutions and to the aspirations and principles that underlie them. India had the privilege of being one of the Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in 2024. We are happy to report that the collective presidency of the Conference was able to elicit consensus on a Decision on the Work of the Conference. Subsequently, the five Subsidiary Bodies of the Conference agreed on reports.

The ability of the Conference and its Subsidiary Bodies, in the current circumstances, to find consensus is testament to the continuing ability of diplomacy to generate compromise in difficult times.

Madame Chairperson,

India's support for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is consistent with the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly. As a nuclear weapon state, our commitment to universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament remains undiminished. This goal can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory.

Pending the global elimination of nuclear weapons, India has put forward a number of proposals for reducing, in all its aspects, nuclear risks and dangers in the document CD/1816 submitted to the Conference on Disarmament.

As a responsible nuclear weapon State, India is committed, as per its nuclear doctrine, to a policy of credible minimum deterrence with the posture of No-First Use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States.

Without diminishing the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, India supports the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

Madame Chairperson,

India will table 4 draft resolutions in the First Committee this year. These well-known resolutions are on:

‘Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons’,

‘Reducing Nuclear Danger’,

‘Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring WMDs’ and.

‘Role of Science and Technology in the context of International Security and Disarmament’.

These resolutions have consistently highlighted crucial issues pertaining to disarmament and international security and have enjoyed wide support of the UN membership. We request continued support.

Madame Chairperson,

As a major spacefaring nation, India has vital developmental and security interests in Outer Space. My country’s space vision includes Gaganyaan, a human space flight program and a Bharatiya Antariksh Station or Indian Space Station.

India believes that Outer Space belongs to all of us and that it should be an arena for cooperation and not conflict.

India supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at the Conference on Disarmament. India had engaged constructively with the Open Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors. An Indian expert participated in the recent Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. We note that the GGE was able to adopt a report.

Madame Chairperson,

The Disarmament Commission in its current cycle is addressing the important issue of common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security.

India believes that emerging technologies can have transformational effects on reducing poverty and improving the lives of our people. This is particularly relevant in the case of developing countries like ours. We should avoid stigmatization of such technologies.

The Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems has made significant progress in building important understandings through its work. India firmly believes that these deliberations must continue within the framework of the CCW. We remain committed to fulfilling the Group's current mandate to "consider and formulate, by consensus, a set of elements for an instrument, without prejudging its nature."

Madame Chairperson,

India accords great importance to the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. They are worthy examples of global non-discriminatory treaties for the complete elimination of the respective categories of weapons of mass destruction.

The use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, under any circumstances cannot be justified.

India has been a key contributor to capacity-building initiatives, including the Analytical Skill Development and Mentorship Partnership Programmes in the OPCW.

India continues to participate constructively in the ongoing work to strengthen the BWC. We hope that the BWC Working Group will be able to achieve substantive progress in improving the effectiveness of the BWC and strengthening its implementation.

Madame Chairperson,

Illicit transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, in particular to terrorists and non-state actors is an area of grave concern for India. We welcome the consensus outcome document at RevCon 4 of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapon under your able leadership.

India contributed actively to the discussions of the OEWG on conventional ammunition; assisted in formulation of Global Framework of Ammunition; and has contributed actively to the review of International Technical Ammunition Guidelines as a member of the Technical Review Board.

Madame Chairperson,

India is committed to promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible, and peaceful ICT environment.

Cyberspace is facing an increasing number of challenges in the form of threats and its misuse for criminal and terrorist purposes. Recognizing the disparity in cyber preparedness among Member States in their abilities to tackle various cyber threats and the need to enhance their capabilities, India has proposed the development of a "Global Cyber Security Cooperation Portal", anchored at the United Nations, as a global platform for international cooperation and coordination amongst Member States on security of cyber infrastructure and improving cyber capabilities.

Madame Chairperson,

In conclusion I would like to inform this Committee about the 4th edition of the fully funded Annual Disarmament and International Security Fellowship Programme that India organizes in order to advance disarmament education. Young diplomats from over 20 countries attended the course earlier this year.

I thank you.