



**STATEMENT BY MR. KALRAJ MISHRA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND
MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 150:
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST THE REPRODUCTIVE CLONING
OF HUMAN BEINGS IN THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 59TH SESSION
OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 21, 2004**

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation attaches importance to the agenda item "International Convention against the Reproductive Cloning of Human Beings". India is deeply interested in the scientific possibility of cloning of human beings. We believe that reproductive cloning is unethical, morally unacceptable and contrary to due respect for the human person that it cannot be justified or acceptable. For this reason, India, through a set of ethical guidelines on biomedical research, had banned reproductive cloning of human beings through nuclear transplantation since 1997. We are convinced of the urgent necessity to elaborate an international Convention banning reproductive cloning, for which consensus already exists in the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been in the forefront of promoting scientific and technological research in the fields of biology and genetics. We recognise that rapid development of life sciences opens up prospects for improvement of the health of individuals and that new technology resulting from stem cells research could be used for finding ways to heal diseases like diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, cystic fibrosis and also certain kind of cancers. Such technologies, in our view, only help to enhance the dignity and worth of the human person and should not be unreasonably restricted.

Mr. Chairman,

A responsible State regulates the use of technology by striking a balance between ethical standards on the one hand and social necessities and benefits on the other. We believe that the technique of somatic cell nuclear transfer should not be used for creating a **child**, because such kind of experimentation, besides being unethical, would also lead to unacceptable risks. However, this technology can be used for the benefit of mankind to free itself from illness and debility.

Mr. Chairman,

We live in an era where transfer of technology from the developed to the developing countries has become increasingly difficult to accomplish. Developing countries, especially those of which have a strong scientific and industrial base, have been facing ever-increasing overt and covert restrictions on their technological development. Owing to these, they are being prevented from pursuing autonomous research in certain vital areas. For these reasons, we do not agree with the view that research should be allowed only on certain stem cells and not on another category of stem cells. Researchers must have all options and Science must decide the relative efficacies of different kinds of stem cells. We believe that every country has a right to choose appropriate technological methods and procedures as long as those are in tune with universally accepted standards of human dignity.

Mr. Chairman,

For the reasons outlined above, we do not accept the proposal contained in draft resolution in document A/C.6/59/L2. We would like to reiterate our position that different forms and methods of cloning other than reproductive cloning can be regulated by national legislation with stringent conditions and regulatory approvals on a case by case basis.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

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