

Introduction of the Resolution "Role of Science and Technology in the context of International Security and Disarmament"

*Statement by Mr. T.P.Seetharam, Minister, Permanent Mission of India in Geneva
on October 30, 2001*

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce a draft resolution "The Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" as contained in document A/C.1/56/L.13 and co-sponsored by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Vietnam and Zambia.

2. This draft resolution addresses an issue of fundamental importance to the international community and particularly to the developing world. Advances in the field of science and technology offer immense possibilities for development. However, there is need to recognise that several of these advances are of dual use and could have both civilian and military applications.

3. Access to scientific and technological advances for developmental purposes is a priority for developing countries for achieving economic growth and to participate actively in global trade. At the same time, several countries in the developing world have had to pay a cost in terms of development because of the persistence of discriminatory control regimes. These regimes are in effect exclusive groupings of countries that limit the exchanges of such technologies amongst themselves, while denying access to others. These regimes are often non-economic barriers to normal trade and go against the generally accepted principles of global economic relations.

4. Exclusive export control policies were initiated to address proliferation concerns at a time when there were no global agreements that comprehensively addressed this issue. Questions have arisen whether such exclusive arrangements with limited membership, and ostensibly for a temporary period of time, have been truly effective in achieving their stated purpose of strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, especially as regards to scientific and technological applications connected with advanced weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

5. The Chemical Weapons Convention - the first multilateral disarmament agreement of a universal character eliminating a complete class of weapons of mass destruction - offered an opportunity to put in place a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory legal mechanism that would simultaneously address proliferation concerns emanating from unregulated transfers while promoting the economic development of States Parties. The CWC placed an obligation on States Parties to review their existing national regulations in the field of trade in chemicals in order to render them consistent with the object and purpose of this Convention. However, the

persistence of certain ad hoc control regimes creating a dual category of States Parties to the CWC, stresses the need for early implementation of all provisions of the CWC.

6. The recent setback to negotiations for an effective protocol to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention of 1972 has unfortunately deprived the States Parties of an opportunity to put in place an effective system of regulation of transfers of agents, toxins, equipments and technologies relevant to the Convention while avoiding measures that hamper the economic development of States Parties.

7. The lack of a genuinely non-discriminatory universal agreement regarding nuclear weapons has also reduced the effectiveness of non-proliferation efforts in the nuclear field. Nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects cannot be divorced from the need for measures that promote nuclear disarmament and the progressive elimination of nuclear weapons. Absence of a disarmament benchmark renders nuclear non-proliferation difficult not only to implement but to measure as well.

8. India has consistently maintained that proliferation concerns regarding materials and technologies related to advanced weapon systems, weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory agreements which are transparent and open to universal participation. The reflection of this principle in multilateral disarmament agreements would not only improve their effectiveness but also create an added impetus for their universality.

9. With a view to carrying forward the consideration by the international community of the issues at hand, India along with co-sponsors of this resolution commends this resolution for adoption by this Committee. We hope that this resolution will receive the support of a large number of delegations.