

*Introduction of the Resolution "Convention on the Prohibition of the use of Nuclear Weapons"*

*Statement by Mr. T.P.Seetharam, Minister, Permanent Mission of India in Geneva  
on October 23, 2001*

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce draft Resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons" contained in A/C.1/56/L.12 and co-sponsored by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Sudan and Vietnam.

2. Mr. Chairman, it is more than a decade since the Cold War ended. The nature of threats to the security of nations has mutated to take new forms as we have experienced in recent times. The threat of a global nuclear holocaust may have receded but as long as nuclear weapons continue to be viewed as a legitimate currency of power, with certain states claiming the exclusive right to possess them in perpetuity, the threat of use of nuclear weapons, whether by states or non-state actors, has increased.

3. Doctrines of first-use of nuclear weapons have been re-validated and reaffirmed by some, who reserve the right to use nuclear weapons even against non-nuclear threats. There is need for addressing this unacceptable threat to humanity at various levels. At the level of political commitments backed by legally binding agreements, it is important for a re-orientation of nuclear doctrines towards a no-first-use and non-use thus de-legitimizing nuclear weapons globally.

4. The historic advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 1996 made international humanitarian law applicable to the use of nuclear weapons.

5. The international community needs to take decisive steps to de-legitimise nuclear weapons as an essential element in the step-by-step process leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. There is thus a requirement for a legally-binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of nuclear weapons.

6. The draft resolution, as in previous years, underlines that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to the survival of mankind, refers to the ICJ's advisory opinion of 1996 that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law, applicable in armed conflict and expresses the conviction that a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and contribute to the climate for the negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The resolution reiterates its request to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use

**or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We regret that due to the inflexible position of certain delegations the Conference on Disarmament has so far not been able to commence negotiations on this subject.**

**7. Mr. Chairman, in commending the Resolution to this Committee as a measure that would be of far-reaching significance and perhaps constitute the first nuclear disarmament agreement, the Indian delegation along with all those which have cosponsored it, expresses the hope that it will receive the widest possible support in this Committee. A positive vote for this Resolution will also be a vote of confidence that the international community can take decisive steps on the path leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons.**