

A55/C.1/L.36: Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

***Explanation of Vote by Mr. J.S. Mukul, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of India in Geneva
on October 25, 2000***

Mr. Chairman,

India has consistently maintained that the only credible guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons lies in their total elimination. Until this objective is achieved, as an interim measure and as one that compliments other measures to reduce nuclear dangers, including such as de-alerting, we believe that there exists an obligation on part of States possessing nuclear weapons to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use of nuclear weapons. This obligation should be of an internationally binding character - clear, credible, universal and without discrimination. There is no delegation opposed to the establishment of an Ad hoc Committee on NSAs in the Conference on Disarmament. Such an Ad hoc Committee will be an essential element in any programme of work in the CD next year which reflects the priorities and interests of all delegations.

For its part and conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear weapon State, India has stated that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against nuclear weapon States and that it remains willing to strengthen this undertaking by entering into agreements on a no-first-use or multilateral negotiations on a global no-first-use. Having stated that we shall not be the first to use nuclear weapons, there remains no basis for their use against countries, which do not have nuclear weapons. India respects the choice exercised by non-nuclear weapon States in establishing NWFZs on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned and remains willing to convert this commitment into a legal obligation.