

74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

General Debate of the First Committee

India Statement
By
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to the Conference on Disarmament

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Mr. Chairman,

1. The very first resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 1(1) of 1946, sought the elimination from national armaments, of atomic weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. UN Member States embraced this objective unanimously in 1978 in the outcome document of SSOD-1, which remains till date the only truly universal disarmament document.

2. Over several decades, India has been unwavering in its support for the attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons and the complete elimination of such weapons. We have consistently expressed our support for nuclear disarmament which is universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable. We remain convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved in a time-bound manner by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. Such a framework would essentially have to rest on three pillars: universal prohibition, complete elimination and international verification.

3. We support the proposal of the negotiation of a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention in the CD, a long-standing priority of the Non-Aligned Movement and the international community. Without prejudice to the priority that we attach to nuclear disarmament, we also support the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD of a non-discriminatory, multilateral internationally and effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. India, as a responsible nuclear weapon State, has followed a policy of maintaining a credible minimum deterrence, no-first-use of nuclear weapons and non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States. We have been prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements. India remains committed to commence negotiations on all three core issues related to nuclear disarmament in the CD. India also remains committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

4. In a Working Paper on Nuclear Disarmament submitted to the UNGA in 2006, India proposed a number of measures towards nuclear disarmament, including the reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear weapons states to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons, reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, negotiating a global agreement among nuclear weapon states on no-first-use of nuclear weapons, negotiating a universal and legally-binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states, negotiating a Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons as well as negotiating a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention. In our view, all these proposals remain valid and relevant today in our pursuit of global nuclear disarmament.

5. We believe that there is a need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. Two of India's traditional resolutions, also to be tabled this year, on negotiating a Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons and on Reducing Nuclear Danger arising from accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons have found support from a large number of States over the years as steps towards the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons. Given today's international security environment, we welcome the enhanced resonance of the international community on the shared objective of our resolution on Reducing Nuclear Danger.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.