

73rd Session of the United Nations

First Committee Thematic Debate on Disarmament Machinery

INDIA STATEMENT by Mr. Mayank Joshi Director (Disarmament)

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Madam Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor Madam Chair. I also thank the panelists yesterday for the informative briefing on disarmament machinery. My delegation also aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the NAM Group.

2. In this growing interdependent world, witnessing increasing geopolitical uncertainties, conflicts and imminent threat of terrorism, the United Nations and the triad of disarmament machinery, i.e. the First Committee, Conference of Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), continue to play a critical role in furthering the objectives laid out in the first Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I) held four decades ago.

3. The UN has a central role and the primary responsibility for advancing the goals of disarmament. India remains committed to the principles and objectives enshrined in the UN Charter and to multilateralism in their pursuit. India reiterates its commitment to preserve and strengthen the disarmament machinery as envisaged in the SSOD-I.

4. The work of the disarmament machinery is not hampered by any procedural flaw or inherent deficiency; rather, it is lack of political will on part of member States which has impeded their smooth functioning. The usefulness and necessity of existing disarmament machinery has been underlined by the positive developments in the past year in the triad, which testify the remarkable resilience and relevance of the decades old machinery.

Madam Chair,

5. The First Committee is the embodiment of the international community's faith in multilateral approaches on disarmament and international security issues. It provides member States, with diverse perspectives, a platform to voice their views and acts as a forum for building consensus for collective action on the disarmament agenda.

6. The continued relevance of Conference on Disarmament (CD), despite all difficulties and challenges it faces today, cannot be overstressed. India's commitment to CD remains undiminished. It brings together member States in full sovereign equality and responsibility for embarking on negotiations of legally-binding instruments based on the principle of consensus and contributes to international peace and security.

7. It is encouraging to see that the substantive discussions in the subsidiary bodies in the CD this year have laid a solid groundwork for achieving the required 'momentum' for taking forward its mandate. On the other hand, it remains disappointing to see that the CD has not been able to adopt a programme of work.

Madam Chair,

8. India attaches importance to the UNDC as a universal forum and the specialized deliberative leg of the disarmament machinery put in place by the first Special Session on Disarmament. UNDC has demonstrated its capability to make valuable contribution to the disarmament discourse through the notable achievement of adoption by consensus of recommendations on 'Practical confidence building measures in the field of conventional weapons' last year and also the commencement of discussions on 'outer space'.

9. We are also encouraged by the consensus on recommendations for objectives and agenda for the fourth Special Session on Disarmament, which is indicative of the will of members to work together.

Madam Chair,

10. The UN Secretariat, particularly the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), is a key partner in achieving disarmament goals. A greater coherence between disarmament work in New York and in Geneva is important and more resources from regular budget should be allocated to increase their capacity, enabling them to fulfil their functions. Further, the work of United Nations Institute for Disarmament and Research (UNIDIR) and the Advisory Board

on Disarmament Matters (ABDM) has been of immense value in deliberative processes, negotiations and research.

11. To benefit from UNIDIRs expertise, India has proposed in its draft resolution on the 'Role of Science and Technology in the context of international security and disarmament', for UNIDIR to convene a one day seminar on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmaments affairs in Geneva in 2019 on the issue. This would also facilitate developing cross-linkages among the disarmament machinery.

Madam Chair,

12. International security is hinged upon dialogue and cooperation amongst member States and commitment to multilateralism. The triad of the disarmament machinery needs to function as a composite whole, so that ideas can flow and progress made in one institution can be leveraged in the other. India is fully committed to reinforce and strengthen the ongoing work of disarmament machinery.

Thank you.