



INDIA
भारत

Statement

by

Mr. Vijay Gokhale, Foreign Secretary

at

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

73rd Session of United Nations General Assembly

New York

26 September 2018

Mr. President,

India joins the international community in welcoming the commemoration of the International Day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons on September 26, this year. India associates itself with the NAM Declaration on the commemoration of this day. India supported the UNGA Resolution A/RES/72/251 on the follow-up to the High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, which was put forward by NAM and endorsed by a significant majority of UN Member States.

Mr. President,

India has been unwavering in its support for universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons consistent with the highest priority accorded to nuclear disarmament by the Final Document of the First Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I). India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory.

There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines.

India considers the Conference on Disarmament - the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum - as the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention with a mandate agreed to by consensus as part of a programme of work.

Despite best efforts, the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to adopt a programme of work that reflects the international community's desire for progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. For its part, India stands ready to commence negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention on the lines of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the only comprehensive and internationally verifiable treaty so far

banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and providing for their elimination. Further, without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, India supports the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

Mr. President,

We believe that increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons would contribute to the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons, an essential step for their eventual elimination. In this regard, India's resolutions in the First Committee on measures to Reduce Nuclear Danger (A/Res/71/37) and on a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons (A/71/75) have received consistent support from a large number of Member States.

Mr. President,

We hope that this important event to commemorate the International Day for the total elimination of Nuclear Weapons would enhance public awareness and knowledge about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

India will work with NAM and other like-minded States to take forward the international efforts to achieve the noble goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I thank you Mr. President.
