



STATEMENT BY MR. HAMID ALI RAO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO  
THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, GENEVA, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE  
FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 63<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 10, 2008

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Delegation congratulates you on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee. We would like to assure you of our full cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities. India associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. The reference in that statement to universality of the NPT pertains to views of NAM states parties to the NPT and does not reflect India's position.

Mr Chairman,

The United Nations is the embodiment of our faith in the benefits of collective action and of multilateral approaches in resolving global issues concerning global peace, stability and development. India's approach to addressing issues relating to disarmament and international security – the mandate of the First Committee, is underlined by our conviction that global contemporary challenges are best addressed through collective efforts imbued by a spirit of genuine multilateralism. We must work together, in cooperation and partnership to address threats to international security, both old and new, and to show a new spirit of unity of purpose and vision to advance global disarmament and non-proliferation goals and objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

India attaches the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament, as enshrined in the Final Document of SSOD I. This year we mark the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the "Action Plan for Ushering in a Nuclear-weapon free and Non-Violent World Order" proposed by Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, to the Third Special Session on Disarmament of the General Assembly. India's commitment to universal, non-discriminatory nuclear

disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons was reiterated by our Prime Minister on June 9, 2008 as well as by our External Affairs Minister on September 5, 2008. Speaking at the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the General Assembly on 26<sup>th</sup> September, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh reiterated India's proposal for a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and providing for their complete elimination within a specified time frame.

While the end of the Cold War created new space for action on global disarmament, with notable results such as the conclusion of the Chemical Weapons Convention eliminating, on a universal and non-discriminatory basis, an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, the goal of nuclear disarmament has remained a distant one. We call upon the First Committee to reinforce the message, now being echoed even by prominent statesmen and experts in the field, in favor of generating a new momentum to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. No effort must be spared in building consensus to this end.

India has put forward both at the General Assembly and in the Conference on Disarmament a set of practical measures to stimulate debate and promote consensus on the way forward. The measures we suggest include:

- Reaffirmation of the **unequivocal commitment** of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons.
- **Reduction of the salience** of nuclear weapons in security doctrines.
- Taking into account the global reach and menace of nuclear weapons, adoption of **measures by nuclear-weapon States** to reduce nuclear danger, including the risks of accidental nuclear war, de-alerting of nuclear weapons to prevent unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons.
- Negotiation of a global agreement among nuclear-weapon States on '**no-first-use**' of nuclear-weapons.
- Negotiation of a universal and legally-binding agreement on **non-use of nuclear weapons** against non-nuclear weapon States.
- Negotiations of a **convention** on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.
- Negotiation of a **nuclear weapons convention** prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.

Mr Chairman,

It is clear that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes and require concerted and cooperative international efforts. India supports such efforts aimed at realizing global non-proliferation objectives. Expansion of

international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by increasing the share of nuclear energy as a non-polluting energy source, in a manner that is safe, secure and consistent with non-proliferation objectives, will have a positive impact on global energy security and international efforts to combat climate change. We attach importance to carrying forward this process through dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation with our international partners.

India supports the negotiation in the CD of an FMCT that is universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable. India joined the consensus, as reflected in the UNGA Resolution 48/75 L which envisaged FMCT as a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. We support efforts towards building the necessary international consensus so as to enable the CD to move forward on this important issue. India has continued to observe a moratorium on nuclear explosive tests.

India supports negotiation with a view to reaching agreement on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. As part of its credible minimum nuclear deterrent, India has espoused a policy of 'no first use' and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states and is prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements.

We support international efforts to strengthen the present international legal framework to ensure the safety and security of space assets and to prevent the placement of weapons in the outer-space. While noting that there is no legal regime governing the possession and use of missiles, we believe that any initiative to address these concerns in a sustainable and comprehensive manner should be through an inclusive process based on the principle of equal and legitimate security.

India has contributed actively to UN efforts to strengthen regulation of small arms and light weapons as we believe that it is necessary to break the nexus between small arms proliferation and terrorism and organized crime. We remain strongly committed to the CCW process which offers the only forum of a universal character that brings to together all the main producers and users of major conventional weapons, thus ensuring that the instruments that emerge have a greater prospect of making a meaningful impact on the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

As in the previous year, India seeks the support of the First Committee for the following three resolutions:

- (i) Convention on the Prohibition of use of nuclear weapons.
- (ii) Reducing nuclear danger.

- (iii) Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to save time during the plenary debate we will make our detailed presentation on these resolutions during the time allocated for that purpose.

In conclusion, let me assure you of India's strong commitment of working together to ensure a successful outcome to this Committee's deliberations.

Thank you.

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