

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY, CONFERENCE ON
DISARMAMENT, GENEVA – February 14, 2023**

Thank you, Mr. President,

I join other delegations in expressing our deepest sympathies for the people of Turkiye and Syria following the earthquakes.

Let me begin by congratulating you on the manner in which you and your team have conducted the first presidency of this year. We note with appreciation your efforts to find common ground to enable the CD to commence substantive work.

We also note the circulation of a draft programme of work for which we are thankful to you and your team.

We have like others, referred it to capital, and are in the process of examining it carefully. We would like to seek some more time to give it our fullest consideration.

We have noted that it has many elements with which we agree, such as the attention it has paid to two items on the CDs agenda which have long been seen as priorities for the international community, viz., PAROS and NSAs. The inclusion of these items in your draft is consistent with the support they have received from the international community.

Mr. President,

My delegation believes that the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum for the international community must build on the work that has already been done. This is required for it to effectively discharge its function – that of negotiation and conclusion of disarmament agreements.

In this context, I would like to recall our statement of January 26 and reiterate the position of my delegation that the Conference should commence immediate negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

We feel that the constitution of working groups in a balanced and comprehensive programme of work needs, in accordance with Art 23 of the Rules of Procedure, to reflect this priority of a working group with a negotiating mandate for a FMCT.

Commencement of negotiations should not be stopped by differences in the priority attached by different States to different agenda items.

Mr. President,

India will work with other delegations to make progress towards our common goal, which is reaching consensus on a Programme of Work to enable the CD to move forward.

We are confident that under your Presidency, no efforts will be spared to find solutions taking into account the interests of all stake-holders.
