



INDIA भारत

Permanent Mission of India Conference on Disarmament

Statement by India at the Conference on Disarmament: meeting of the Subsidiary Body 5 – “New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons – Comprehensive programme of disarmament – Transparency in armament”, Geneva, 13 August 2024

Mr. Coordinator

Allow me to start by thanking you to co-ordinate the work of subsidiary body 5, which covers CD's Agenda Items 5,6 and 7. We assure you of our full support.

Mr. Coordinator,

Since 2002, India has been sponsoring an annual GA Resolution titled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", which seeks to draw attention of the international community to the dangers of the proliferation of WMDs and the potential for its exploitation by terrorists and non-state actors. The resolution, which is adopted by consensus every year, urges Member States to support international efforts and strengthen national measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Mr. Coordinator

The issue of radiological weapons has been on the agenda of the CD since 1979, following the General Assembly's call in 1978 for concluding a Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. The issue was considered in Ad Hoc Working Groups during 1980-83 and in Ad Hoc committees between 1984-1992.

The international community has undertaken several important measures to protect and secure nuclear and radiological materials. These include the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and the Code of Conduct for Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. The IAEA has taken various steps to improve the regulatory framework for nuclear security. The UN Security Council Resolution 1540, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and Nuclear Security Summits have also played an important role in this context.

Last year, India supported the GA resolution 78/51 titled “Radiological weapons”, which calls for commencement of negotiations to conclude, as an initial step, a legally binding multilateral prohibition of the use of radiological weapons by States. India’s vote, which we explained in the GA, is without prejudice to how radiological weapons are defined and any understandings about the scope of a possible instrument on radiological weapons, legally binding or otherwise.

We stand ready to unpacking the issue in greater detail in the work of the subsidiary body next year.

Mr. Coordinator

Since 1988, India has sponsored a resolution adopted by consensus in the First Committee, and most recently adopted as A/RES/78/22, on the “Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament.

A/RES/78/22 states that “the accelerating pace of technological change necessitates a system-wide assessment of the potential impact of developments in science and technology on international security and disarmament, with due regard to avoiding duplication and complementing efforts already under way in United Nations entities and in the framework of the relevant international conventions.” It also calls upon member states to “remain vigilant in understanding new and emerging developments in science and technology that could imperil international security.”

My delegation would also like to acknowledge the reports of the UN Secretary General, mandated by this resolution, including its most recent report A/78/268.

Mr. Coordinator,

India acknowledges the concerns that have arisen due to emerging technologies. We are committed to doing our utmost to address these concerns.

I would like to note here that the topic of “Emerging technologies” is by itself not listed as a specific item under the Agenda of the CD.

I would also like to point that the UN Disarmament Commission, another part of the Disarmament Machinery, is in its current three-year cycle, discussing “recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security” in one of its two working groups.

A number of discussions are taking place in other diplomatic platforms on various technologies. These include, but are not restricted to, the CCW GGE on Emerging Technologies in the area of LAWS; the OEWG on Security of and in use of ICTs; the GGE on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and proposed OEWGs on the same issue as well as on Reducing Space Threats through Responsible Behaviours and the work of the UNDC on TCBMs in Outer Space. Emerging technologies and threats are also being discussed in the ambit of the Biological Weapons Convention.

We must acknowledge that a considerable amount of work has been done in these bodies and needs to be built upon. We also need to be careful in respecting mandates, avoid prejudicing proceedings in other fora, and prevent duplication.

India also believes that emerging technologies can have transformational effects on reducing poverty and improving the lives of our people. For a developing country like India access to technology that can have such a transformational potential is a substantial concern. We speak for the Global South when we seek assurances that developmental priorities will not be affected by processes on emerging technologies, including in the military domain.

I thank you.
