

Statement on “Prevention of nuclear war, overview of strategic and other developments” Conference on Disarmament, Subsidiary Body 2 -Geneva, 11 February 2025

Mr. Coordinator,

India congratulates you on assuming the role of Coordinator of Subsidiary Body 2. We look forward to working under your stewardship and assure you of our fullest support.

We appreciate your consultative approach.

Mr. Coordinator,

My delegation would have preferred an explicit, unambiguous, and clear reference to a FMCT in the topics under Subsidiary Body 2.

It is imperative to build on our past work in this Conference including CD/2139 and commence negotiations in the CD on an FMCT based on CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

India looks forward to in-depth discussions on a Fissile Material Cut off Treaty in subsequent meetings of this SB. We will be speaking on specific points in greater detail at a later stage.

Mr Coordinator,

Without prejudice to the priority that India attaches to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the CD, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, of a universal, non-discriminatory, and internationally verifiable Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT) that meets India’s national security interests.

Our support for FMCT negotiations in the CD is consistent with India’s interest in strengthening the global non-proliferation regime that would add a measure of strategic predictability and a baseline for future global nuclear disarmament efforts. Given this objective and given the CD’s vocation, it is essential that all relevant countries participate in these negotiations in the CD and contribute to its successful outcome.

UNGA resolution 48/75L adopted by consensus in 1993 envisaged FMCT as a significant contribution to non-proliferation in all its aspects. India co-sponsored this resolution and has supported all subsequent FMCT resolutions in the UNGA.

India supported the establishment of an Ad hoc Committee on an FMCT in the CD in 1995 and in 1998 and agreed on CD/1864 in 2009, which provided inter alia for establishment of a Working Group to negotiate an FMCT. India participated in the work of the Subsidiary Body 2 on FMCT in 2018, 2022 and 2024 and joined consensus on CD/2139.

Mr. Coordinator,

The UNGA Resolution 48/75 L reflected with clarity the common understanding of the basic objective of the treaty. The mandate for the proposed treaty was reflected in this resolution and reconfirmed by the Shannon Report in CD/1299 i.e. to “negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”.

India is opposed to reopening this mandate as it provides a clear and feasible basis for taking forward negotiations on what is a very complex subject.

The obligations and responsibilities arising from the treaty must apply in a non-discriminatory manner to all States Parties directly affected by the treaty’s obligations and responsibilities. The treaty would be global in character. An FMCT is not a regional arms control treaty.

Mr. Coordinator,

The treaty should allow the unhindered production of fissile material for permitted purposes under the treaty on a non-discriminatory basis. This would include the production of fuel for civil nuclear energy without prejudice to the variety of fuel cycles currently in use or envisaged for the future. Permitted purposes should also include non-proscribed activities such as production and use of fuel for naval propulsion.

Mr. Coordinator,

India has actively participated in every relevant forum on this subject, including the GGE on FMCT established pursuant to the UNGA resolution 67/53 and the HLEPG on FMCT established pursuant to the UNGA resolution 71/259 and welcomed their respective reports A/70/81 and A/73/159 adopted by consensus.

The Reports of the GGE on FMCT and the HLEPG on FMCT, underlined that the Treaty and its negotiation in the CD remains a priority enjoying broad international support and that the CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein, remains the most suitable basis on which future negotiations should commence. In our view, this was the most significant conclusion of these consensus reports.

Mr. Coordinator,

As to the suggestions for declaring a moratorium, India would like to underline that a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, cannot be a substitute for an FMCT. A moratorium by its very nature is voluntary, reversible and not verifiable, unlike an FMCT which will impose a treaty obligation, and will be verifiable and irreversible.