

## **Statement by India on “Practical and political measures” under Subsidiary Body-2 of the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 18 March 2025**

**Thank you, Coordinator,**

1. Thank you for convening the meeting and inviting panelists, who have provided us with very insightful presentations earlier today. I have a prepared intervention for our session, which I will go onto to deliver.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

2. Without diminishing the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament my delegation supports the negotiation in the CD of an FMCT on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. Like others, we will also assess the outcome of these negotiations from the perspective of our national security.

3. India’s support for FMCT negotiations in the CD is consistent with our 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.

4. The verification regime of an FMCT could, for instance, serve as a building block for eventual nuclear disarmament verification. Thus, it would be an important step towards nuclear disarmament but would not in itself be a disarmament measure - for which a separate, more comprehensive instrument would be required.

5. The mandate in CD/1299 requires that the treaty be non-discriminatory. Thus, the obligations and responsibilities arising from the treaty must apply in a non-discriminatory manner, in particular to all States parties directly affected by the treaty’s obligations and responsibilities.

6. The treaty should include all States which are essential stakeholders for the treaty and thus critical for universal adherence.

7. The dynamic correlation between scope, definitions and verification will be an important factor in the treaty, while taking into account the costs of implementing the treaty. The treaty should not place an undue burden on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy or on non-proscribed military activities.

8. The treaty will stand on its own. It is neither a derivative nor an adjunct of any other existing treaty. In fact, this treaty is sought to be negotiated precisely because of the gaps and infirmities in existing instruments.

9. India participated in the GGE and the HLEPG on FMCT and welcomes the substantive work undertaken by the Groups and its reports. The work of the GGE and HLEPG, however, do not amount to either pre-negotiations or negotiations on an FMCT, which in our view, should take place in the CD on the basis of the agreed mandate. The

expert groups have nonetheless brought to bear varied but enriching perspectives on various aspects of a future treaty thus deepening our understanding of its many complexities, which only a serious and interactive discussion can bring forth.

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

11. We hope that the outcomes of the HLEPG, as well as the GGE, which is the result of the most thorough inter-governmental assessment of an FMCT, will be taken forward for the eventual commencement of FMCT negotiations at the earliest in this Conference.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

12. India believes that TCBMs are not a substitute for the commencement of negotiations in the CD for a legally binding treaty on FMCT. What would constitute core elements of the Treaty cannot be addressed outside the CD negotiations, or in a piece-meal form as confidence building measures. The HLEPG on FMCT has noted that TCBMs, which States may or may not decide to include in a treaty, need to be clearly distinguished from mandatory obligations against which compliance may be assessed.

13. The FMCT itself constitutes a TCBM to enhance strategic trust among all states possessing nuclear weapons. It will enhance trust between possessors and non-possessors by conveying a legally-binding and internationally and effectively verifiable assurance regarding the ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which when universally implemented would generate invaluable trust and confidence for the international community to proceed towards the ultimate goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons through an universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable Nuclear Weapons Convention.

14. The best TCBM would be by committing ourselves to negotiations in the CD as per CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. As such India supports dialogue amongst all relevant stakeholders to enable the early commencement of negotiations on the basis of CD 1299- the agreed mandate in the Conference on Disarmament, and until formal negotiations begin, in-depth and focused discussions in the CD on technical aspects such as verifications tools and techniques, evolving technologies for verification, declaration formats, management of fuel cycles, possible organizational issues etc. – not as standalone CBMs, but as an informal dialogue that which would better prepare member states for the eventual commencement of CD negotiations.

15. While we support the commencement of negotiations on FMCT in the CD on the basis of CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein, India believes that a voluntary moratoria on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices is by its very nature will be voluntary, reversible, and not verifiable, unlike an

FMCT that will impose a treaty obligation and which will be verifiable and irreversible. In the absence of such legally agreed verification measures, declared moratoria may in fact increase distrust amongst members states prompting them to take measures that may run counter to the objective of early commencement of FMCT negotiations in the CD.

16. In conclusion, I would like to point out, as was affirmed by delegation of France and Japan, that this is a subsidiary body meeting which has a substantive mandate, agreed in the past, to negotiate a FMCT on the basis of CD/1299. Delegations should therefore avoid raising matters that have no bearing on a FMCT, as it would amount to a misuse of resources of the Conference.

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