

STATEMENT BY INDIA AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, GENEVA, 23 JANUARY 2025

Mr President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference.

As the first President, you have a special and a difficult role, and my delegation assures you of our fullest support. We appreciate the manner in which you have, thus far, conducted the Presidency and your consultative approach.

Mr President,

We meet today in the midst of conflict. We meet under the sobering realization that our security architecture might prove unequal to the stresses that it is confronted with.

Today, when we face the understanding of the fragility of peace, we are reminded of the importance of our work. We are reminded of our responsibility, more than ever, of going back to our vocation, and to the basics of our craft i.e. to compromise, to negotiate, and to arrive at agreements and understandings.

Mr President,

India is committed to multilateralism and multilateral institutions and to the ideas of compromise and collective security that underlie them.

India attaches importance to the Conference as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, as mandated by the final document of SSOD-I. The Conference should commence negotiations on issues on its agenda and advance its work of negotiating legally binding instruments.

India remains committed to the goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. India, in its Working Paper CD/1816 has called for a complete elimination of nuclear weapons through a step-by-step process. We reiterate the need to take the steps outlined in this paper, including the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention.

India is a responsible nuclear weapon state and is committed, in accordance with its nuclear doctrine, to maintain credible minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. We are prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements.

India has traditionally sponsored annual UN General Assembly resolutions calling on this Conference to negotiate a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons

and on Reducing Nuclear Danger that have been supported by the majority of member states.

India calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). We noted that CD/2390 adopted in 2024 acknowledges the previous efforts of the Conference. In this context, my delegation believes that negotiations on a FMCT must be based on CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

India believes that Outer Space belongs to all of us. We are one earth, one family, and have one future. India supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

Mr President,

India welcomes the adoption by the Conference of its Agenda.

It is a matter of satisfaction that the Conference was able to adopt a Decision on the Work of the Conference in 2024. It is also a matter of satisfaction that the five Subsidiary Bodies agreed on reports.

The ability of the Conference and its Subsidiary Bodies, despite the circumstances, to find consensus is testament to the continuing ability of diplomacy to generate compromise in difficult times.

We remain hopeful that the Conference, under your able stewardship, will swiftly adopt a Decision on the Work of the Conference for 2025. My delegation believes that CD/2390 is an adequate basis for such a Decision and that a swift movement towards a Decision will allow the Subsidiary Bodies adequate time to advance the substantive work of the Conference.

Mr President,

Before concluding, let me take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the distinguished Ambassadors of Belgium, Brazil, DPRK, Egypt and Hungary, and other colleagues, who have joined us this year.

Our delegation also places on record its appreciation of the contributions of Ambassador Bruce Turner of the US to the work of this Conference. We would also like to bid farewell to other colleagues who have departed following the completion of their assignments and wish them the best in their endeavours ahead.

I thank you.
