

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANUPAM RAY – PLENARY MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, JANUARY 26, 2023

Mr President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference. It is a pleasure to see Egypt, a fellow member of the Group of 21, as the Chair of the Conference.

My delegation assures you of its fullest support in the Conference and in the P6+2 in which we are privileged to join.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the Ambassadors of Sri Lanka, Iran, Republic of Korea, Ecuador and of the United States and other colleagues.. We had the opportunity to interact with Ambassador Bruce Turner during the First Committee. We look forward to working with him and all our distinguished colleagues who have joined recently. We convey our regards to Ambassador Li Song and wish him good luck.

We also note with appreciation the support that Conference receives from the Secretariat and the competence with which it executes its functions.

Mr President,

It is a particular honour for me to speak to this Conference on India's 74th Republic Day. We are particularly happy, Mr President, to have His Excellency the President of your great country as our guest on this day in the largest democracy in the world. This is a day on which we reaffirm our commitment, among other things, to the ideals enshrined in the UN Charter and to multilateralism.

Our enduring commitment to multilateralism is reflected in our call for a New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System or NORMS that reflects current realities.

The current complex international situation underlines the urgency of efforts to reach multilaterally agreed measures to varied challenges to international peace and security.

Mr President,

India attaches importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, as mandated by the final document of SSOD-I.

India also attaches importance to the continued and effective functioning of the disarmament machinery- the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee - as envisaged in the final document of SSOD-I.

We believe that 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 calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) on the basis of CD/1299, and the mandate contained therein.

India is a responsible nuclear weapons 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 separate United Nations 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.

We have been a consistent advocate of preserving Outer Space as the common heritage of mankind. India supports the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

Mr President,

India notes, with regret, that the Conference was only able to adopt a procedural report in 2022. This does not accurately reflect the depth and detail of discussions held in the Conference last year.

India also takes note that Subsidiary Bodies were constituted, and met, in 2022.

We also note with regret that the resolution on the Conference on Disarmament was not adopted by consensus by the 77th session of the General Assembly.

Mr President,

India welcomes the adoption by the Conference of its Agenda.

We appreciate your efforts in holding extensive consultations with Member States including that with the Indian delegation. We look forward to receiving the draft Programme of Work during the upcoming plenary sessions.

We are hopeful that under your leadership and guidance, the CD will be able to adopt its Programme of Work.
