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**PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA  
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT  
GENEVA**

STATEMENT BY

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to the Conference on Disarmament**

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Mr. President,

I would first like to mention how happy my delegation is to see you in the chair and how conscious it is of the burden you are carrying in difficult times. You have, of course, our fullest support in your ongoing endeavour to find a way out of CD's present impasse.

I have requested the floor today to inform the Conference about the passage in both houses of the Indian parliament, on 13<sup>th</sup> May, of the Bill on Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery System (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities). It is now awaiting Presidential assent, when it will be notified as an Act. While being new, this legislation continues, codifies and widens policies and regulations which have been the hallmarks of India's ongoing vocation to ensure safety, security and the strictest possible controls on a variety of goods and technologies related to weapons of mass destruction. India has been exercising controls over the export of WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies for several decades. We have had a corpus of legislation of direct and indirect relevance to weapons of mass destruction such as the Explosive Substances Act, the Atomic Energy Act, the Chemical Weapons Convention Act and the Environment Protection Act. We had simultaneously put in place administrative mechanisms to prevent unlawful access to such weapons and their delivery systems. Nevertheless, conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State, the Indian government considered it desirable to introduce an over-arching and integrated legislation by building upon the existing regulatory framework. This enlarges the scope of the existing system of controls over the export of WMD-usable materials, equipment and technologies and prohibits a range of unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Our system of export controls remains under continuous review. We shall continue to update these controls whenever it is necessary to do so.

Mr. President,

The Bill is illustrative of India's abiding commitment to prevent nuclear proliferation. It also fulfils the requirement of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. It seeks to prohibit individuals from dealing with the weapons of mass destruction in any form, including manufacturing, transporting, possessing, exporting and brokering. It criminalizes the range of unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. It makes it a severe criminal offence to transfer weapons of mass destruction, missiles specially designed for their delivery and WMD-usable material, equipment and technologies to terrorists or to transfer fissile and radioactive material for use in terrorist acts.

While introducing the Bill in the Indian parliament, our Foreign Minister Mr. K. Natwar Singh reiterated India's commitment to safeguard its security as a nuclear weapon State. He stated that this, in no way, diminishes India's commitment to the objective of a nuclear weapon free world. We aspire for, he said, a non-violent world order, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

India has taken steps to underline that its nuclear policy is one of restraint, responsibility, predictability, transparency and defensive orientation. We have an unblemished non-proliferation record. We are aware that development of indigenous capacities in advanced civilian and strategic technologies requires greater vigilance concerning its possible misuse. India is determined to use advanced technologies for its security, for the welfare of its peoples and for meeting the nation's developmental requirements. India is equally determined to contribute to global peace and security. India's policy, therefore, has been never to assist, encourage or induce any other country to manufacture nuclear weapons. Our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, asserted in a public statement on 17<sup>th</sup> May that India would not be a source of proliferation of indigenously developed sensitive technologies. He further stated, and I quote: "We will adopt the most stringent measures to safeguard and secure the technologies that we possess, or those that we acquire through international collaboration."

The strict regulation of external transfers and tight controls to prevent internal leakages should give confidence to the international community about India's commitment and ability to fully secure the technology, equipment or material available to it. We are willing to be partners against proliferation, while ensuring that our legitimate interests are safeguarded. India's strategic programmes, both in the defence and nuclear fields, are indigenous and not dependent on external sources. They cannot be subjected to externally imposed constraints. Within these parameters, India is prepared for the broadest possible engagement with the international non-proliferation regime.

I thank you Mr. President.