



INDIA
भारत

Please check against delivery

Statement

by

Mr. Inder Jit
Member of the Indian Delegation

at

the 60th Session of the First Committee of
the United Nations General Assembly

New York

October 04, 2005

Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations
235 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017 • Tel: (212) 490-9660 • Fax: (212) 490-9656
E-Mail: india@un.int • indiaun@prodigy.net

Mr. Chairman,

Please accept my delegations warm felicitations on your election to the Chair. We are most happy to see you in that position and assure you of our fullest support.

2. The failure last month in reaching consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation issues at the 2005 World Summit, reflected in the omission of these subjects from the outcome document, demonstrated our inability to grasp the gravity of the existing and emerging threats to international security. It also highlighted the divergence in the interests and priorities of Member States on these two crucial issues that have an important bearing on international peace and security.

3. The widening gap between perception and reality and the security interests and priorities of key States have paralysed the multilateral disarmament machinery. For eight successive sessions, the Conference on Disarmament has not conducted any substantive negotiations. The Disarmament Commission has, for two consecutive sessions, not been able to agree even on its agenda.

4. There is a deep connection between the deficient functioning of the disarmament machinery and the decline of the multilateral ethic in international relations. We need multilateralism for progress on disarmament and non-proliferation because it is inclusive, in seeking to build and expand common ground, and also because it is democratic, in accommodating the priorities and interests of all. Multilateralism is even more relevant today, with the imperatives of increasingly globalised economy; the emerging knowledge society and the resulting indivisibility of peace and stability.

5. It would be wrong to locate the current stalemate in disarmament machinery in its procedures. By doing so, we are addressing only the symptom, not the cause. The decision making process in CD is not dysfunctional. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with it, rather it is a reflection of the lack of adequate political will. If that were the case, we would not have succeeded in negotiating and concluding the chemical weapons convention. This Convention, which provides for verifiable elimination of an entire class of weapon of mass destruction, is a model of a truly non-discriminatory instrument. When we deal with issues that directly or indirectly impinge on security interests of states, it is only through an inclusive multilateral process of building consensus that the states can be assured that their basic security interests will not be compromised. Specific national positions can be both protected and reconciled for the common security interests of all through such a process.

6. Resorting to ad-hoc mechanisms or processes will not lead to any breakthrough; it may rather weaken the institutions like the Conference on Disarmament and Disarmament Commission that we very much are committed to preserve and strengthen. In this delicate period, there should be every effort to strengthen existing multilateral disarmament processes and institutions.

7. The First Committee shoulders the immense responsibility of seeking convergence in views and approaches on key disarmament and international security issues. Through interactive dialogue we can evolve better understanding of one another's security concerns and priorities and enlarge the common ground. We also hope that through our discussions we would be able to build upon the strength of the existing multilateral disarmament machinery to increase its effectiveness for our collective good rather than despair that the current situation is without remedy.

8. India firmly believes in the continued validity of multilateral approaches. We believe that the multilaterally negotiated and legally binding instruments provide the best mechanism to deal with the disarmament and arms control issues. It is our view that diplomatic perseverance, in preference to conflict and confrontation, works the best when we deal with issues of peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The issue of nuclear weapons continues to be central to our work. The Programme of Action, adopted by consensus at SSOD-I, which accorded primacy to nuclear disarmament, remains valid even today. It has been India's consistent view that the threat posed by the nuclear weapons can only be eliminated through their total elimination in a progressive and systematic manner. India has advocated that the highest priority be given to global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and has, for the realisation of this objective, presented a number of initiatives over the years, including the very detailed and comprehensive 1988 Action Plan based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and a balance of obligations for the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time bound framework. As recently as 29th July, our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, reiterated in parliament that India's commitment to work for universal nuclear disarmament would remain our core concern.

10. We believe that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are inter-linked and are mutually re-enforcing. Only total elimination of nuclear weapons will provide the assurance that there will be no further proliferation of nuclear weapons. At the same time addressing growing proliferation concerns in an inclusive manner consistent with the UN Charter and international law will reinforce the commitment to and facilitate achievement of the goal of nuclear

disarmament. Today the non-proliferation framework remains beset with crises. To address this, it is necessary for the nuclear weapon states to reaffirm their commitment to nuclear disarmament. It is also necessary for all states to implement fully and in good faith the obligations they have accepted.

11. While pursuing the goal of nuclear disarmament, there is a need to take immediate interim steps to reduce the nuclear danger, including such measures as de-alerting of nuclear weapons. There is also an urgent need to adjust nuclear doctrines to a posture of no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear-weapons. India's nuclear posture is characterised by responsibility, predictability and a defensive orientation. This is reflected in India's declared policy of no-first-use and non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

Mr. Chairman,

12. India has an abiding interest in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction not just for its own security but also for the peace and security of the world at large. In fact our security environment had been adversely affected due to the inability of the existing non-proliferation framework to effectively deal with proliferation.

13. India fully shares the concerns of international community on the growing danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the alarming possibility that terrorists may acquire these weapons and resort to their use to cause devastation and terror on a large scale. It was because of this shared concern, that India had introduced the resolution "Measures to Prevent Terrorists from Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction" in 2002 which has been adopted by consensus since then.

14. India has in the last year actively participated in various multilateral efforts to deal with the possible linkages of terrorism with the weapons of mass destruction including in the diplomatic conference to amend the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and Regional Radiological Security Partnership. We welcome in this context the call by the UN Secretary General for early entry into force of the Convention to Prevent and Suppress Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

15. India remains conscious of the responsibilities deriving from the possession of advanced technologies both civilian and strategic and is determined to ensure that these do not fall into the wrong hands whether of states or non-state actors. India has never been a source of proliferation of sensitive technologies and related materials or equipment. Our record in this regard has been unblemished. We have

established a comprehensive system of export controls, which is continuously reviewed and updated and accords with the global standards.

16. As a reflection of India's abiding commitment to non-proliferation, in addition to a corpus of existing legislation dealing with activities of direct or indirect relevance to weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related equipment and technology, India has recently enacted an overarching and integrated legislation, "Weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems (prohibition of unlawful activities) Act." This important legislative action, promulgated in June this year, builds on the existing system of export controls.

17. It is our view that, if the emerging proliferation challenges are to be effectively addressed, the international community should review the existing framework to better adapt it to current threats and challenges and to existing realities, while not hampering co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy with States whose non-proliferation records are beyond doubt. States need to show the requisite political will to deal with these challenges in a forthright manner, and not adopt an inconsistent approach as we have witnessed in the past. As a mature and responsible nuclear power, India remains ready to engage, on the basis of equality and consistent with the requirements of its national security, in all multilateral consultations to develop such a framework.

18. India is committed to meet the expanding needs of energy, due to our growing economy and imperatives of social development and to ensure our energy security in future. We are resolved to develop nuclear energy as an important component of our overall energy basket. Our goal is to generate at least 20,000 MW of nuclear power by the year 2020. The development of nuclear energy will reduce pressure on oil prices and provide a clean and environmentally sustainable alternative to fossil fuels.

19. There are immense opportunities for international collaboration in development of nuclear power. We appreciate the decision of some key States to cooperate with India in the endeavour to develop our nuclear power generation capacity. We are engaged in constructive dialogue with the international community for finding ways to facilitate international collaboration in development of nuclear power.

20. In the interest of time, we have not addressed all issues on our agenda. We propose to cover them during the thematic debate and our other interventions. We look forward, meanwhile, to working together with other delegations to make this session of the First Committee a productive one.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.