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STATEMENT

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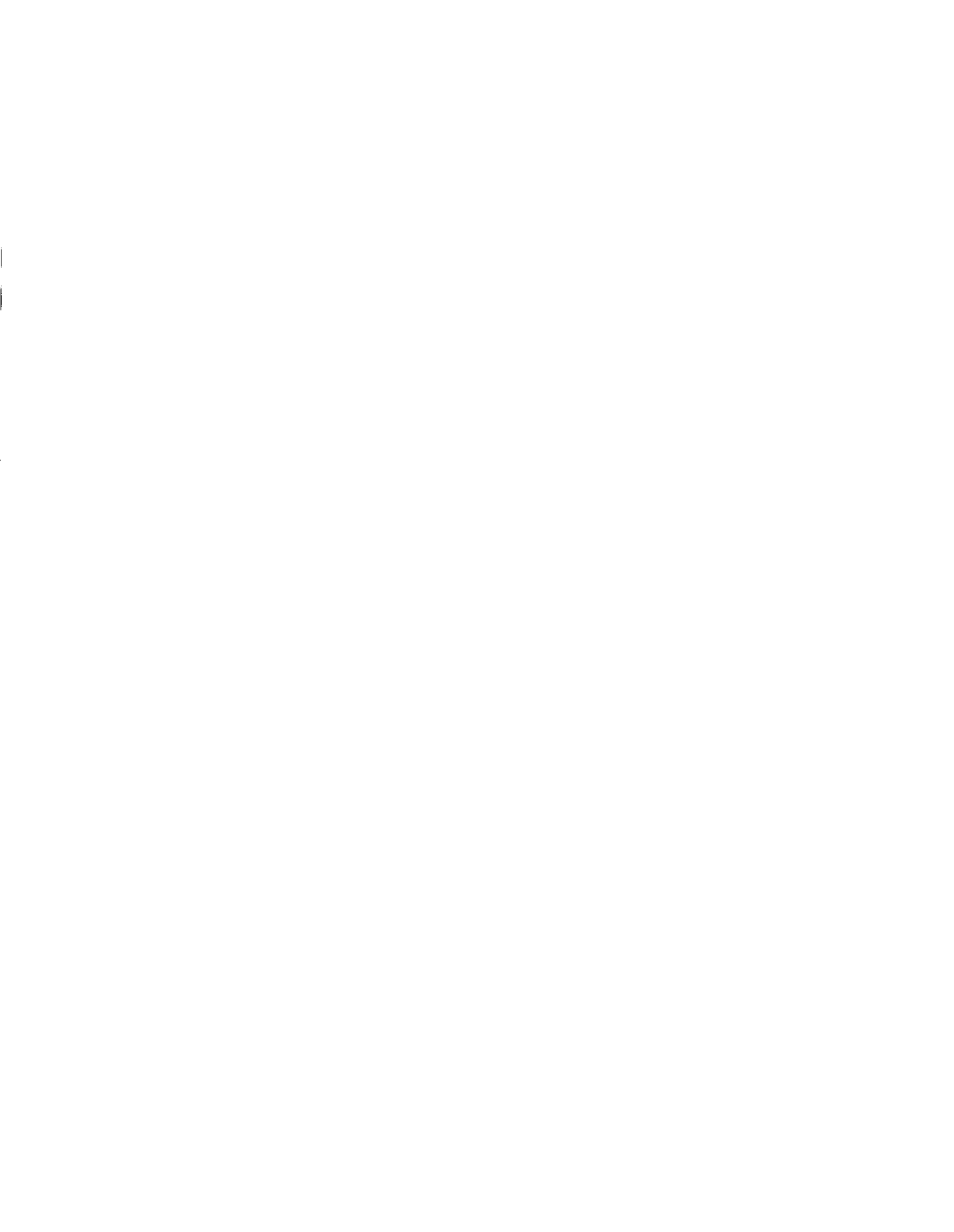
**AMBASSADOR HAMID ALI RAO,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
GENEVA**

**THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON THE UN DISARMAMENT
MACHINERY**

**AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE
65TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK

OCTOBER 18, 2010



Statement by Ambassador Hamid Ali Rao of India
First Committee thematic discussion on the UN Disarmament Machinery, 18
October 2010

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations in accordance with its Charter has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. The First Special Session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly created the current disarmament machinery comprising of a triad of the First Committee of the General Assembly, the UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. The UN disarmament machinery is the mechanism by which we give expression and coherence to international efforts in the area of disarmament and international security.

2. We recognize the importance of and are committed to strengthening the First Committee. The First Committee embodies our faith in the benefit of collective action and of multilateral approaches in resolving global issues of peace, security and development.

3. India attaches importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum for negotiating legal instruments of global applicability. When the required political will was generated, a multilateral, verifiable and non-discriminatory treaty eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction – the Chemical Weapons Convention - was negotiated in the in Geneva. While we share the widespread disappointment that we have not been able to reach agreement for many years on commencing negotiations in the CD, we do not believe that the current impasse stems from the disarmament machinery per se or its procedures. Since the CD's decisions impact on the national security of member states, it is logical that the CD remain a member state driven forum and conduct its work and adopt its decisions by consensus.

4. In a demonstration of India's support to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, India's External Affairs Minister Shri S M Krishna participated in the High Level Meeting held on 24 September 2010 where he said:

“India welcomes the Secretary General's initiative to convene this meeting. We believe that its main purpose is to send a clear message of support for the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament

negotiating forum and to provide political impetus to the multilateral disarmament agenda.”

“The Conference on Disarmament adopted a consensus decision in May 2009 on its Programme of work, which included immediate commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. Such negotiations, which we support, are without prejudice to India’s principled position on other agenda items, in particular the priority issue of nuclear disarmament. We share the disappointment expressed here by a number of speakers that the CD has been prevented from undertaking its primary task of negotiating multilateral treaties. We reaffirm our support for the CD as the single multilateral negotiating forum, recognized as such by the international community. We also support the immediate commencement of FMCT negotiations in the CD as part of its Programme of work in early 2011.”

5. The UN Disarmament Commission has discharged an indispensable function by providing a universal deliberative forum for building consensus on disarmament and international security issues. The UNDC has produced several important sets of guidelines and recommendations to the General Assembly inter alia the Guidelines on Confidence Building Measures, on Verification and on International Arms Transfers. It is indeed the only universal forum that provides for in-depth consideration of specific disarmament issues and which can help bring back coherence and consensus on the currently fragmented international disarmament agenda. We encourage those who are concerned about the UNDC to engage more seriously in its work.

6. Mr. Chairman, the UN Secretariat, in particular the ODA, has an important responsibility in assisting states in upholding the role of UN forums. We believe that the ODA should be strengthened to facilitate the implementation of permanent treaty bodies under the UN such as the BWC and the CCW. Expertise in the Geneva branch of the ODA on small arms and light weapons should also be strengthened in order to bring greater coherence between the work undertaken in New York and in Geneva. The UNIDIR too needs to be enabled fully with resources to realize its potential. It deserves greater support from the regular budget of the UN to be able to generate independent, in depth and long term research on disarmament issues. UNIDIR should be in the forefront of research on nuclear disarmament so that it can respond to current expectations. This task cannot be accomplished when the Institute is over-dependent on voluntary contributions and thus cannot devote human resources to priority issues on a sustainable basis. Further, India believes that in order to foster greater awareness

of disarmament issues and strengthen global collective will in favour of global disarmament objectives UN should make greater efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation education. The recommendations of the 2002 UN study remain an indispensable guide in this respect.

7. With regard to the Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament matters, we believe that this body should be more representative so that it can reflect the broadest range of perspectives. It should take an inclusive and forward looking approach to global disarmament issues, rather than attempt to be a preparatory committee of one or another treaty.

8. A final point before I conclude. There is an impression that our failure in addressing substantive disarmament and international security issues is due to procedural flaws and inherent inefficiency in the disarmament machinery. We need to remind ourselves that a bad workman often quarrels with his tools. In an interdependent world, it is only inclusive multilateral processes that can balance the interests of important stake holders, identify win-win situations that promote international security, and advance legally binding agreements that can be sustained over time. We have no better alternative than to strengthen the universal multilateral ideal and the institutions it engenders.

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