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भारत

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**STATEMENT
BY
AMBASSADOR D.B. VENKATESH VARMA
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, GENEVA
THEMATIC DEBATE ON
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

AT THE
FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 70TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NEW YORK

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Statement by Ambassador DB Venkatesh Varma
Permanent Mission of India to the CD

First Committee thematic debate on Conventional Weapons

26 October 2015

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Nonaligned Movement.

The illicit transfer of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists and non-State actors, remains a major threat to international peace and security and an impediment to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Though there is no global and comprehensive instrument to address this challenge, the UN Programme of Action outlines a realistic approach to address this problem, through cooperative efforts at the national, regional and global levels. India supports taking forward the UNPOA on the basis of consensus amongst all Member States.

India is party to the CCW and its five Protocols and remains committed to the CCW objective of progressively strengthening the role and principles of international humanitarian law while striking a balance between addressing humanitarian concerns and military necessity of States. India will contribute to the success of the CCW meetings this year and the Review Conference next year.

India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines. India participated as an Observer at the Third Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention in Maputo in 2014.

We support the approach enshrined in Amended Protocol II of the CCW on anti-personnel land mines which addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States with long borders. India has discontinued the production of non-detectable anti-personnel landmines and observes a moratorium on their transfer. We are also contributing to international demining and rehabilitation efforts.

Amended Protocol II is an useful framework for addressing the issue of Improvised Explosive Devices or IEDs which are increasing being used by terrorists and illegal armed groups. We appreciate the

initiative taken by Afghanistan to table a new resolution on IEDs at the First Committee this year.

India supports continued discussions in the CCW on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) as per an agreed mandate. We feel that LAWS should be assessed not just from the view point of their compatibility with international law including international humanitarian law but also on their impact on international security if there is dissemination of such weapon systems.

India supports the UN Register on Conventional Arms and the UN Report on Military Expenditures and has submitted its national reports in 2015.

India has strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons which conform to the highest international standards.

India continues to keep under review the ATT from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests. During the negotiations, India had raised concerns on a number of gaps that remained in the final text. It remains to be seen if the entry into force of the Treaty will have a meaningful impact on the ground- in particular on correcting the imbalance in the rights of exporting and importing states and in stemming the flow of arms to terrorist and non-state armed groups. Perhaps it is too early to draw definitive conclusions, but current trends do not offer much hope.

Thank you.