



भारत
INDIA

Please check against delivery

**Thematic Debate on
Other Weapons & Mass Destruction**

INDIA STATEMENT

**Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma
Permanent Representative to the
Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, at the
First Committee of the
71st Session of the
United Nations General Assembly**

New York

18 October 2016

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

India attaches high importance to the two Conventions on Chemical and Biological Weapons as examples of non-discriminatory treaties in the field of disarmament for the total elimination of a specific type of weapons of mass destruction. The success of these Conventions can be a model for the future elimination of the other type of weapons of mass destruction- nuclear weapons.

India reaffirms that disarmament is a primary goal of the Chemical Weapons Convention and should remain a priority till the complete destruction of all chemical weapons is achieved. India completed the destruction of its chemical weapon stockpiles in 2009 within the stipulated time frame under the CWC. The remaining possessor States should fulfil their obligations within the shortest possible time. Full effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article XI is essential for the realisation of the object and purpose of the Convention. Universality is also fundamental to the success of the Convention.

India has a large and growing chemical industry. India has the second largest number of declared facilities and receives among the largest number of inspections from OPCW. India has a flawless track record of verification inspections. We believe that the OPCW needs to evolve transparent and objective criteria and modalities for inspections. The provisions of the Convention should be implemented in a manner that does not hinder legitimate activities, especially in countries like India with a large and growing chemical industry.

It has been our consistent position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at anytime by anybody under any circumstances cannot be justified and the perpetrators of such abhorrent acts must be held accountable. India contributed to international efforts under UN and the OPCW for destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) and welcomes the progress made so far in their destruction. We have taken note of the recent reports of the Technical Secretariat (TS) of the OPCW on Syria. We would encourage further consultations between Syria and the OPCW with an aim to fully resolve all the outstanding issues in the spirit of trust and cooperation.

My delegation is deeply concerned with reports of acquisitions of chemical weapons and their delivery system by terrorist groups and continuing use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals in Syria and Iraq by terrorists. We believe that the international community must take urgent measures and decisive actions to prevent the possibility of any future use of chemical weapons.

My delegation also welcomes international efforts that paved the way for successful removal of the remaining Category 2 chemical weapons stockpiles from Libya for their destruction abroad.

Mr. Chairman,

India remains committed to improving the effectiveness of the BWC and strengthening its implementation and its universalization. India shares the widespread interest amongst States Parties to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the implementation of the Convention through the negotiation and conclusion of a Protocol for that purpose. We believe this is necessary in view of the new challenges to international peace and security emanating from proliferation trends, including the threat posed by terrorists or other non-state actors seeking access to biological agents or toxins for terrorist purposes.

India is actively participating in the preparatory process among States Parties leading to the Eighth Review Conference to be held in November 2016, and has supported a robust consultation process as envisaged by UNGA Resolution 70/74. India has submitted a Joint Working Paper with France on measures to strengthen Assistance under Article VII of the Convention. We have tabled a Joint Working Paper with the United States on strengthening the implementation of Article III of the Convention. As part of broader outreach, India hosted a Regional Workshop on the Eight Review Conference in cooperation with UNODA and the EU on 29- 30 August in New Delhi, and are confident that the deliberations at this Workshop would contribute to a successful Review Conference. These demonstrate India's contribution of concrete proposals on key aspects of the Convention and our willingness to work with partners to build broad based understandings and agreement that would benefit all State Parties to the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

India has strong and law-based national export controls consistent with the highest international standards with reference to control of nuclear, chemical, biological and toxin weapons and their means of delivery. India has filed reports to UNSCR 1540 and has provided the latest update in 2015. India has made considerable progress in its engagement with the relevant multilateral export control regimes with a view to seeking full membership and has joined the MTCR and HCOC this year.

Thank you.