

**Statement by Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India at the International Day for Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 26 September, 2014**

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is a matter of satisfaction that we are marking September 26, 2014 as the International Day for the total elimination of Nuclear Weapons. India associates itself with the NAM Declaration on the commemoration of this day.

**Mr. Chairman,**

India supported the UNGA Resolution A/Res/68/32 on the follow-up to the High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, which was put forward by NAM and endorsed by a significant majority of UN Member States.

The high level of participation at last year's High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, and in today's event, reflects the strong international support for the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

India has joined the call made by the Group of 21 in the Conference on Disarmament on March 26, 2014, calling for the Conference to commence negotiations on a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention pursuant to UNGA resolution 68/32.

The position of the Group of 21 is reflected in its Working Paper, CD/1999 dated September 4, 2014.

**Mr. Chairman,**

India has been unwavering in its support for universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMDs consistent with the highest priority accorded to nuclear disarmament by the Final Document of First Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I).

India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory.

There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines.

The United Nations, in accordance with its Charter, has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament.

India attaches high importance to the UN disarmament machinery established by SSOD-I. The triad of disarmament machinery comprising of the First Committee, the UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament is the mechanism by which the international community gives expression and coherence to its efforts in the area of disarmament and international security.

India considers the Conference on Disarmament - the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum - as the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on Nuclear Disarmament through the establishment of a subsidiary body with a mandate agreed by consensus as part of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We hope that this important event to commemorate the International Day for the total elimination of Nuclear Weapons would enhance public

awareness and knowledge about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

India will work with NAM and other like-minded States to take forward international efforts to achieve this noble goal.

I thank you.

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