

Statement by Mr. Siddhartha Nath
First Secretary, Permanent Mission of India to the CD

First Committee Thematic Debate on
UN Disarmament Machinery

27 October 2015

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. India has joined the statement made by the Russian Federation on behalf of a group of member states in support of the CD.

The UN disarmament machinery established by SSOD-I, consisting of the triad of the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, remains relevant and valid. While its overall review should be the prerogative of SSOD-IV, there would be merit in considering ways to improve its work efficiency.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. The First Committee is the embodiment of the international community's faith in the benefit of multilateral approaches on disarmament and international security issues. The UN Disarmament Commission is the only universal forum that provides for in-depth consideration of specific disarmament issues for building greater understanding and consensus on issues on the international disarmament agenda. The Commission has produced several important sets of guidelines and recommendations for the General Assembly in the past. We support efforts to reinvigorate the work of the UNDC during the current triennial cycle.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the Conference on Disarmament continues to have the mandate, the membership and the rules of procedure to discharge its responsibility as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Since the decisions of the CD impact national security, it is logical that it conducts its work and adopt its decisions by consensus. Member states should exercise caution in pursuing OEWGs in particular those with a negotiating mandate, to replace the established disarmament machinery, promising uncertain outcomes.

India remains committed to efforts aimed at the CD reaching consensus on its Programme of Work to commence early substantive work. While we share the disappointment that negotiations have not commenced, we value the work conducted this year under the Informal Working Group on a Programme of Work co-chaired by Finland, and its consensus report. India participated actively in the structured informal discussions on four of its agenda items which provided for an in-depth consideration of issues. We appreciate the fact that the UNSG has commended the GGE's report on FMCT to the Conference, noting that the GGE had identified the CD as the venue of negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

The membership of various Group of Governmental Experts constituted by the Secretary General has been the subject of some concern in this Committee. We regret that India was excluded from the GGE on TCBMs in Outer Space and the GGE on Information and Telecommunications in the context of International Security, which in our view lessened the content of their deliberations and reports. We hope that future GGEs will have a more balanced and representative participation of member states willing and capable of making a positive contribution.

India highly values UNIIDR based on its mandate given by SSOD-I and strongly supports efforts underway to ensure the long term sustainability and effectiveness of UNIDIR as a research body of global relevance, so that it can fulfill its role of providing in-depth and long term research on disarmament issues, in particular nuclear disarmament.

All possible efforts should be made to enable the UN Regional Centre for Asia/Pacific to resume its functions from Kathmandu at an early date.

The Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters should be more representative to enable an inclusive and forward looking approach to global disarmament issues. In terms of depth of analysis and quality of vision, the reports of the Advisory Board in recent years have been less than inspiring.

Thank you.