

UN Security Council

Open Debate

23 August 2016

Challenges in addressing Proliferation of WMDs, their means of Delivery, and related Materials

INDIA STATEMENT

**Ambassador Tanmaya Lal
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Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this debate on an issue that is of continuing concern for the international community and requires constant vigilance and genuine cooperation among member states to address the challenge effectively. We also thank the briefers for updating us on the current trends that are relevant to this issue.

Mr. President,

2. We are fully cognizant of the catastrophic dangers that the transfer of Weapons of Mass Destruction to non-State actors and terrorists could entail. Clandestine proliferation networks must be rolled back and their resurgence prevented. The global community must join hands in eliminating the risks related to sensitive materials and technologies falling into the hands of terrorists and non-State actors.

3. In this regard, India has enacted a number of effective laws and regulations and has put in place institutionalized administrative mechanisms to prohibit access to Weapons of Mass Destruction by terrorists and non-State actors. Since the adoption of the UNSC resolution 1540 more than a decade ago, India has taken additional steps to further strengthen its existing legislative and regulatory mechanism for exercising control over Weapons of Mass Destruction and their means of delivery.

4. India is committed to maintaining the highest international standards with reference to control of nuclear, chemical, biological and toxin weapons and their means of delivery. India has strong law-based national export controls consistent with the highest international standards. India has filed reports to the UNSCR 1540 and hosted the 1540 Committee in New Delhi in 2012.

5. Earlier this year, India has joined the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime) and the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

Mr. President,

6. The focus on non-State actors should in no way diminish State accountability in combating terrorism and dismantling its support infrastructure and its linkages with Weapons of Mass Destruction.

7. India believes that the primary responsibility for ensuring nuclear security rests at the national level. But national responsibility must be accompanied by responsible behavior as well as sustained and effective international cooperation.

8. India participated in the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) held in Washington earlier this year. We welcome the outcome of the Summit and see the NSS process as having catalyzed significant progress on nuclear security through international cooperation.

9. Our recent steps taken to strengthen nuclear security include the setting up of a Counter Nuclear Smuggling Team (CNST) and joining the INFCIRC/86g (*Joint Statement on Strengthening Nuclear Security Implementation*). India has also offered to host a Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) event in 2017.

Mr. President,

10. The goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons 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. This was reiterated by our Minister of External Affairs Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, speaking in the General Assembly last October, when she stated that India was aware of its responsibilities as a nuclear weapons state and that its support for this goal was undiminished.

11. All states possessing nuclear weapons can make a contribution by engaging in a meaningful dialogue to build trust and confidence, by reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. We believe that increasing the restraints on the use of nuclear weapons is not only an essential first step, but is also necessary in the current complex international environment in enhancing strategic trust globally.

12. As a responsible nuclear power, India's nuclear doctrine continues to stress a policy of credible minimum deterrence with a posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. We remain committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

Mr. President,

13. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are examples of global non-discriminatory treaties for the complete elimination of the respective categories of weapons of mass destruction. They also fulfill an important non-

proliferation function. India has fulfilled its obligations under the CWC. We look forward to a successful Eighth Review Conference of the BWC in November this year. In this regard, India is organizing a Regional Workshop in New Delhi early next week on 29-30 August 2016.

Mr. President,

14. In closing, may I say that all States should fully and effectively implement the obligations, arising from the disarmament and non-proliferation related agreements or treaties to which they are parties.

15. Further, the essential role of the UN in issues of disarmament must be preserved. In particular, it is important to enhance confidence in the UN disarmament machinery consisting of the UN General Assembly, the UN Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The Security Council has a role as specifically provided in relevant Disarmament related instruments or treaties and in the UN Charter.

16. Taking forward disarmament and non-proliferation issues globally, would require a genuine commitment to multilateralism, and to building common ground.

17. India remains committed to these objectives of global disarmament and non-proliferation and is willing to work with other Member States to advance these objectives.

Thank You.
