

**Statement by India in the CD Plenary after the adoption of
Decision on Programme of Work contained in CD/1863
29 May 2009**

Mr. President, we have requested the floor after joining consensus on the Draft Decision for the establishment of a Programme of Work for the 2009 Session contained in CD/1863 where we had, inter-alia, conveyed our willingness to conclude a universal, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We wish to place on record India's perspective on the Programme of Work just adopted and spell out the essential basis of India's concurrence for commencement of negotiations on an FMCT.

2. India supports the establishment of a Working Group to negotiate an FMCT as part of the CD's programme of Work. India was one of the original cosponsors of the UNGA resolution 48/75/L adopted in 1993 on FMCT as it envisaged the treaty as a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. The mandate for the proposed treaty was explicitly reflected in the 1993 UNGA Resolution and reconfirmed by the Shannon Report contained in CD/1299 i.e. to 'negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices'. The scope of such a treaty would focus on the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

3. We are committed to participating constructively in the FMCT negotiations in the CD. Our Prime Minister stated in Parliament on 13th August 2006 that India is willing to join only a non-discriminatory, multilaterally negotiated and internationally verifiable FMCT, as and when it is concluded in the Conference on Disarmament, provided our security interests are fully addressed. India is a nuclear weapon state and a responsible member of the world community, and would approach these negotiations as such. We will not accept obligations not in keeping with or prejudicial to our national security interests or which hinder our strategic programme, our R&D as well as three-stage nuclear programme. The treaty should not place an undue burden on military non-proscribed activities.

4. India attaches the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament. Speaking at the UNGA on 26 September, 2008, our Prime Minister reiterated India's proposal for a Nuclear Weapon's Convention for banning the production, development, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and to provide for their complete elimination within a specified time frame. This is consistent with India's longstanding commitment put forward in the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan in 1988. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of our national security and will remain so pending the global elimination of all nuclear weapons on a universal, non-discriminatory basis. An FMCT would be a step towards this goal.

5. While joining the consensus on this Programme of Work, we wish to place on record our disappointment that the Conference could not decide on launching negotiations on nuclear disarmament. We feel that there is a heavy responsibility on the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, to respond meaningfully to growing international opinion in favour of Nuclear Disarmament. While India has gone along with the establishment of Working Group to exchange views and information on practical steps for progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of their elimination, we believe that the CD should continue to actively explore all possible avenues to advance the Conference's work for actual commencement on negotiations on nuclear disarmament. CD/1863 does in fact include the possibility of future negotiations and we believe that the CD should take concrete steps in that direction.

6. The work of the CD should be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and on the basis of strict adherence to the Rule that CD shall conduct its work and adopt its decisions by Consensus, to provide the necessary assurance that the security interests of member states shall be fully protected.

7. We would like to conclude by placing on record our deep appreciation for your efforts and those undertaken by your predecessors with the aim of finding common ground to enable the CD to commence substantive work this year. We are hopeful that our common efforts will bear substantive fruit in the years ahead.