Thematic Debate on
UN Disarmament Machinery

INDIA STATEMENT

Counsellor Mr. Siddhartha Nath,
Permanent Mission of India to the
Conference on Disarmament
at the
First Committee of the
71st Session of the
United Nations General Assembly

New York 26 October 2016
Mr. Chairman,

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

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

Mr. Chairman,

In accordance with its Charter, 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, and welcome informal discussions on Outer Space in 2017.

Mr. Chairman,

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 adopts its decisions by consensus. Member states should exercise caution in pursuing initiatives outside the established machinery that promise uncertain outcomes but risk weakening the disarmament machinery. India remains committed to efforts aimed at the CD reaching consensus on its Programme of Work to commence early substantive work. We share the disappointment that commencement of negotiations continue to be blocked by one country.

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 hope that future GGESs will have a more balanced and representative participation of member states willing and capable of making a positive contribution.

India highly values UNIDIR based on its mandate given by SSOD-I and strongly
supports efforts underway to ensure the long term sustainability and effectiveness of UNIDIR as 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. 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, which we hope could improve the quality of its Reports to meet the high standards that this Group should aspire to.

Thank you.